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TO THE
YOUNG PERSONS
OF THE PARISH OF OAKINGTON,
ESPECIALLY THOSE WHO HAVE BEEN
INSTRUCTED IN ITS
SUNDAY SCHOOL,

THESE PAGES ARE AFFECTIONATELY INSCRIBED
BY THEIR FAITHFUL FRIEND AND PASTOR,
THOMAS WEBSTER.

EASTER, 1833.

THE
SACRAMENTAL WEEK

Monday.

INTRODUCTION.

MY DEAR YOUNG FRIENDS,

I HAVE been for many years called upon to minister in holy things in this place, and a very large proportion of you to whom I now write have been by my hands baptized in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost, and thus received into the visible church of Christ; while it has been my object to set before you, from the first moment you were able to attend to

instruction, the love and mercy of that Saviour who invites the young to approach unto him, saying, "Suffer the little children to come unto me, and forbid them not; for of such is the kingdom of heaven." I would fain hope that these instructions and invitations have not been in vain; that at least some of you have indeed begun to seek after God; and that those impressions which have at times been evidently produced on your minds, have not altogether vanished as the morning cloud, or the early dew; but that the gospel which you have heard has been as good seed falling into good ground, and which shall in due season bring forth fruit unto life everlasting.

While however I would hope, from the serious attention with which you listen to my discourses, that such is indeed the case with some, allow me as one who is watching for your souls, and must shortly give account, most earnestly to intreat you not to let the sincerity of your Christian profession remain doubtful either to yourselves or others, but to press forwards, to give diligence to make your calling and

election sure ; to grow in grace and in the knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ ; that you may be indeed stedfast, unmoveable and always abounding in the work of the Lord. For then, my dear young friends, whether we are spared to each other for a longer or a shorter period here on earth, we may humbly hope, yea confidently anticipate, that we shall indeed meet together with holy joy at the right hand of our God and judge, and shall hear the glad sound, come ye blessed children of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you.

This, my dear young friends, is my heart's desire and prayer for you, for your parents, and for all our relations, neighbours, and acquaintance, that they and we may be indeed accepted of God in that day ; and in order to promote this blessed end, I am now anxious to induce you seriously to consider, diligently to prepare for, and devoutly to attend on, the Sacrament of the Lord's Supper. I have indeed repeatedly, and in various ways, endeavoured to bring this subject before you, and have invited, and intreated you, your Parents and fellow

worshippers, to a due participation of this Holy Ordinance; hitherto however, my exhortations and intreaties have been, in too many cases, ineffectual; and I would now therefore try whether the placing in your hands a few plain statements, arguments, intreaties and directions, may not, through the divine blessing, produce a more permanent effect than the addresses which I have from time to time delivered to you in the house of God. Allow me then earnestly and affectionately to request your careful perusal of this little volume, and your serious attention to its contents. If you meet with some things in it not perfectly plain at first, or which do not appear exactly to meet your views or suit your case, do not therefore lay it aside as useless, but read it again and again; and above all, beseech your Heavenly Father to assist and enable you to understand and profit by the instructions which it contains, so far as those instructions are agreeable to his holy word. For this end you will do well from time to time to lift up your heart in prayer to God, in some such words as follow.

PRAYER.

O Lord our Heavenly Father, who hast promised to give thine Holy Spirit to them that ask it,mercifully vouchsafe to pour down upon me his gracious influences. Enable me to understand and profit by thine holy word. Assist me to draw near unto thee in all thine appointed ordinances. Help me to believe on the Lord Jesus Christ to the salvation of my soul; O cleanse me from all my sins through his most precious blood, and strengthen me that I may be in body and soul devoted to thy service; be enabled to resist the temptations of the world, the flesh, and the Devil; and to walk in the paths of righteousness and true holiness. Especially assist me, O Lord, to understand the nature of that holy ordinance, which our adorable Redeemer instituted shortly before his Crucifixion. Let me not either neglect or profane that divine appointment; but help me, if indeed I am one of those who ought to come to thy Table, seriously to examine myself,

and diligently to prepare for that sacred feast. Let me not any longer keep at a distance, through the fear of man, the love of the world, or the temptations of the great enemy, but Lord help me, that I may indeed confess Jesus Christ as my Master, and publicly avow my dependance upon him, by receiving the tokens of his dying love : and grant, O Lord, that this participation of thine holy communion may indeed be for the strengthening and refreshing of my soul ; that I may continually obtain the victory over sin, and daily bring forth the fruits of righteousness ; and that finally, through thy mercy, I may attain to everlasting life, for the alone sake and merits of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, to whom, with thee, O Father, and thee O Holy Ghost, be all honour and glory, world without end, Amen.

II.

Tuesday.

THE DIVINE INSTITUTION.

IN seriously considering the Sacrament of the Lord's Supper, it is important in the first place to notice the account given us in Holy Scripture of its original institution. At the feast of unleavened bread, our Lord Jesus Christ, and the twelve disciples, assembled together at Jerusalem, to eat the Passover. "When the even was come," says St. Matthew, (xxvi. 20, 26—28.) "he sat down with the twelve. And as they were eating, Jesus took bread, and blessed it, and brake it, and gave it to the disciples, and said, Take, eat; this is my body. And he took the cup, and gave thanks, and gave it to them, saying, Drink ye all of it: for this is my blood

of the New Testament, which is shed for many for the remission of sins." In like manner St. Mark declares, (xiv. 22.) "And as they did eat, Jesus took bread, and blessed, and brake it, and gave to them, and said, Take, eat ; this is my body. And he took the cup, and when he had given thanks, he gave it to them : and they all drank of it. And he said unto them, This is my blood of the New Testament which is shed for many. Verily I say unto you, I will drink no more of the fruit of this vine, until that day that I drink it new in the kingdom of God." And St. Luke records, (xxii. 19, 20.) "And he took bread, and gave thanks, and brake it, and gave unto them, saying, This is my body which is given for you : this do in remembrance of me. Likewise also the cup after supper, saying, This cup is the New Testament in my blood, which is shed for you." While St. Paul combines these several passages into one important statement ; when reproving the Corinthians for their abuse of this ordinance, he thus proceeds, (1 Cor. xi. 23.) "For I have received of the Lord that which

also I delivered unto you, that the Lord Jesus, the same night in which he was betrayed, took bread : and when he had given thanks, he brake it, and said, Take, eat ; this is my body, which is broken for you : this do in remembrance of me. After the same manner, also, he took the cup, when he had supped, saying, This cup is the New Testament in my blood : this do ye, as oft as ye drink it in remembrance of me. For as often as ye eat this bread, and drink this cup, ye do shew the Lord's death till he come. Wherefore, whosoever shall eat this bread and drink this cup of the Lord unworthily, shall be guilty of the body and blood of the Lord ; but let a man examine himself, and so let him eat of that bread and drink of that cup."

These passages of holy writ plainly describe the institution of this sacred ordinance—they point out the time when it was instituted ; namely, the same night on which our Lord was betrayed, immediately after he had partaken with his disciples of the paschal supper : they describe the materials which our Lord condescended to use and bless ; namely, bread and wine ;

bread the plainest, and most common food ; wine, cheering, animating, and refreshing : they point out the persons who are to partake in this sacred ordinance, even all the disciples of Christ ; even those who were in various respects so imperfect as, like the Corinthians, to deserve reproof ; who are yet not to abstain, not to keep at a distance, but to examine themselves, and so to eat of this bread and drink of this cup ; and they declare the end for which this ordinance is appointed ; namely, to shew forth the Lord's death till he come ; in remembrance of him ; in remembrance of the Redeemer's death and passion ; of that extremity of suffering which he endured when his body was broken with agony, and his blood was poured out upon the cross ; in remembrance of the end and purpose for which the Saviour thus suffered, and bled, and died ; namely, to bear our sins in his own body on the tree, to make satisfaction to the divine justice, to endure all which the honour of an offended God, or the sanction of a broken law required ; to purchase heaven, and holiness, and happiness, for all his

redeemed people ; to provide and secure the abundant out-pouring of the Holy Spirit, by whose gracious influences the dead in trespasses and sins might be awakened and regenerated ; the weak and ignorant and tempted might be made wise unto everlasting life, and be strengthened to overcome every enemy ; those who are in trouble, affliction, or distress, might be consoled and encouraged ; and all the chosen people of God be at length brought to his heavenly kingdom.

Our Church therefore has, with great propriety, inferred from these statements ‘ that the Sacrament of the Lord’s Supper was ordained for the continual remembrance of the sacrifice of the death of Christ, and of the benefits which we receive thereby.’ That ‘ the outward part or sign of the Lord’s Supper is bread and wine, which the Lord hath commanded to be received ;’ that ‘ the inward part, or thing signified, is the body and blood of Christ ; which are verily and indeed taken and received by the faithful in the Lord’s Supper ;’ and that Christian people are required from time to time, to partake of

this ordinance ; and that their requisite preparation is, ‘ to examine themselves whether they repent them truly of their former sins, stedfastly purposing to lead a new life, have a lively faith in God’s mercy through Christ, with a thankful remembrance of his death, and be in charity with all men.’

To this holy ordinance, my dear young friends, you are especially invited and encouraged to approach ; you have been devoted to Christ in your baptism ; you have been taught to seek daily for present and eternal blessedness through the merits of his sacrifice, and the prevalence of his intercession ; you have been encouraged to renew, in the presence of God and of the congregation, the solemn promise and vow made in your name at your baptism ; and you are now called, required, and expected, to draw near to the Lord’s Table, and receive the tokens of his dying love, and there present yourselves, your souls and bodies, to be a reasonable, holy, and lively sacrifice unto him. O keep not then at a distance, we beseech you : say not I am too young to come ; I am afraid to come ;

I am not fit to come : but remember that you are invited ; that all the disciples of Christ are commanded to drink of this cup, and that while you delay, and neglect this plain command, you are guilty of disobedience to your gracious and merciful Lord and Master,—you sin also against your own souls, and most unworthily distrust and dishonour that Saviour who has appointed this holy ordinance, not as a trap or a snare for your feet, but for the strengthening and refreshing of your souls ; as a means of grace to help you on your heavenly way—as a pledge of his continued love and care, of his abundant compassion and mercy. O consider then the greatness of his love ; the small thing required of you ; the unreasonableness of longer delay ; and pray for divine grace that you may rightly understand and promptly obey that holy command which is set before you in the Saviour's words, “ Do this in remembrance of me.”

PRAYER.

O most gracious, merciful, and holy Lord God Almighty, look down in tender pity and compassion upon me, thine unworthy servant; and for thine own dear Son Jesus Christ's sake, mercifully pardon and blot out all my transgressions, which in thought, word, or deed, I have committed against thy divine majesty. Forgive, O Lord, for his sake, all the neglect of thine ordinances, and all the forgetfulness of thy precepts, of which I have in time past been guilty; and assist me, by the gracious influences of the Holy Spirit, that I may be henceforth more entirely and unreservedly devoted to thy service.

Blessed be thy name, O Lord, that I was born in a Christian land, early baptized in thy name and dedicated to thee; that I have been taught to read and hear thy holy word, and been favoured with abundant means of grace, and opportunities of serving thee. Forgive, O Lord, my unprofitableness, and assist and enable me henceforth to love thee more and serve

thee better. I am now called upon to draw near to thy Table and receive the tokens of my Redeemer's dying love. Lord, help me to understand aright the nature of this ordinance ; let me not presume rashly to intrude into thy sacred mysteries ; yet suffer me not through corrupt and sinful motive, to slight and neglect those means of grace and those holy ordinances which thou hast appointed for the strengthening and refreshing of my soul.

O Lord, I am always dependant on thy bounty ; thou givest me food convenient for me, and I daily partake of the bread which perisheth. Lord, help me to receive Jesus Christ as the food of my soul, and to depend as absolutely and habitually upon him as the bread of life, by whom alone my spiritual life can be sustained, as I depend on the bread which I eat for the support of my bodily life. O grant that his precious blood may indeed cleanse me from all sin ; may it speak peace to my conscience ; and may I be enabled to rejoice in hope of the glory of God. O give unto me, gracious Lord,

that true and living faith in thy dear Son Jesus Christ, which overcometh the world ; help me to embrace and ever hold fast the promises vouchsafed unto us in him ; and grant that I may indeed possess a lively hope of thy mercy through Christ.

Blessed be thy name that thou hast not left us, poor guilty sinners, to perish without hope, but hast indeed provided a sacrifice and atonement for us. Blessed be thy name that we are redeemed, not with gold or silver or corruptible things, nor yet with the blood of bulls or of goats, or the ashes of a heifer, but with the precious blood of Christ, as of a Lamb without blemish and without spot. Lord, I come to thee through him. I seek for mercy for his sake. I would plead the promises given to us who are unworthy through his infinite worthiness. O pardon, accept, save, and bless me, through his all-atoning sacrifice. Teach me, O Lord, what thou wouldst have me to be. Assist me to approach unto thee in thine own appointed way ; help me to search and examine my ways by the rule of thy holy word ; yea, do thou, O Lord, search me and try me.

Let me not deceive myself with a name to live, while I am dead, but grant unto me true and unfeigned repentance of all my sins; help me to hate, forsake, and renounce every evil way; strengthen me by the influence of thy grace, that I may walk in newness of life; implant in my heart the love of thy name; produce in me love to my fellow-creatures, love to mine enemies, and to all who have at any time offended or injured me; and O grant that the love of Christ may constrain me to live no longer to myself, but to him who hath loved me. If permitted to draw near to thee at thy table, vouchsafe thy gracious presence and blessing. Manifest thyself to my soul, and be found of me while breaking bread, and may these earthly ordinances be unto me a pledge and foretaste of the blessedness which thy people shall enjoy in thine heavenly kingdom. Thither, O Lord, vouchsafe to bring me, and all who are near and dear to me, (my parents, my brethren, and sisters, my relations according to the flesh) all who worship together with me and partake of the ordinances of thy house;

yea, fill the earth with thy glory, and may all the world see the salvation of God. Hear, O Lord, and answer, and have mercy and forgive, for the sake of Jesus Christ, in whose name and words I further call upon thee, saying,

Our Father, &c.

III.

Wednesday.

THE COMMUNION SERVICE.

IN order, my dear young friends, that you may be induced and enabled more suitably to partake of the Sacrament of the Lord's Supper, let me request you seriously to read over, and carefully to meditate upon the exhortations, prayers, praises, and encouraging declarations, which are contained in our Communion Service, and which we use while drawing near to the table of our Lord. Much of that backwardness which many feel, and that alarm which others manifest with reference to this ordinance, arise from mistaken ideas, which are commonly entertained, concerning its nature, requirements, and consequences; but which ideas have no

real foundation, either in the statements of Scripture, or the services adopted by our Church.

Let me then entreat you, my dear young friends, to embrace the earliest opportunity of taking up your Prayer books, and carefully reading and seriously considering the whole of the Communion Service, in the order in which it stands ; and as you proceed in your perusal of that service, pause from time to time, and inquire, Is there any thing in this exhortation to which I can fairly object ? any thing in this confession which is not in the main adapted to my case ? any promise or vow which I am here called to make, which I have not already made again and again, unless my baptism, confirmation, and public and private devotions have been merely formal and hypocritical ? Is there in short any part or portion of this service at which a Christian can really hesitate ; which is calculated to produce in his mind any feeling of terror or alarm, or any thing in short, which can justify those awful apprehensions by which many appear to be deterred from approaching to this holy ordi-

nance? It is, my dear young friends, a subtle device of the great enemy of souls, to represent this ordinance as awful and dangerous, that he may deter the young Christian from complying with his Lord's commands, and thus prevent his advancing in the divine life, and retard him from growing in grace and the knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ.

In considering however the Communion Service, or indeed any other of the public offices of our Liturgy, it is important to observe, that those formularies are intended to apply to, and be used by, large bodies of men, whose previous character and conduct, as well as their present feelings and condition, are widely different; and that the language which is introduced, must, in order to apply to the different circumstances of the worshippers, be of a general nature and admit some variety of interpretation. Thus, for instance, young persons, who have been trained up in the bosom of Christian families, and carefully secluded from the grosser evils of the world, have sometimes hesitated in adopting the strong language of the Confession.

They see themselves in various respects to be sinners; they feel that they have transgressed against God in thought, word, and deed; that they need mercy, and can only obtain mercy through Christ; but they hesitate in declaring the burden of their sins to be intolerable; and are afraid of appearing to say more than they really mean. Whereas on the other hand, many who have gone very far from God, but who are now mercifully recovered, feel such language strictly appropriate, and exactly suited to their case, and thank God that there is encouragement in his word for the very chief of sinners to return to him. Yet there is an obvious sense in which such passages may be adopted by all; however mercifully we may have been preserved from the grosser evils and abominations, and however light the burden of our transgressions may comparatively appear, yet is it most certain that but for God's mercy in Christ, that burden would sink our souls in everlasting misery and despair. Our hearts could not endure, nor our hands be strong, should God arise to contend with us; one transgression of his

law brings us under a curse, and from that curse there is no escape or deliverance, except through the sacrifice and intercession of the Lord Jesus Christ, for whose sake we are taught earnestly to seek for mercy..

You must therefore, my dear young friends, endeavour to adopt the language of our several services in that sense which appears most appropriate to your own case; and though at first you may perhaps hesitate whether some particular expression exactly applies, yet I have little doubt that a more careful consideration of the passage, combined with a closer examination of yourselves, and fervent prayer for the divine teaching and grace, will speedily convince you that every part of the Communion Service is at once admirable in itself and peculiarly adapted to the real wants, feelings, dangers, and perplexities of the devout communicant.

I am unwilling, my dear young friends, to detain you longer from the perusal of this valuable service, and yet there are one or two suggestions which may deserve attention. Should you meet with any

passage which you do not understand, or which may in the first instance excite painful feelings, or alarming apprehensions in your mind; do not lay the book aside, and dismiss the subject from your thoughts, but mark the passage, and keep it steadfastly in view while you proceed with the remainder of the service; very probably some subsequent expression may remove the difficulty, and shew you the passage in another and more favourable light: thus for instance those cautions which are inserted in the different exhortations against eating and drinking unworthily, lest we should eat and drink our own damnation, and which have alarmed, and do alarm many with the fear, lest by an unworthy participation they should incur the damnation of hell, are in the exhortation read at the communion, very properly explained as referring to God's fatherly chastisements, with which he visits those who provoke him, 'with divers diseases and sundry kinds of death:'—an interpretation strictly agreeable to the declaration of the apostle, "For this cause many are weak and sickly among you,

and some sleep. For if we would judge ourselves, we should not be judged; but when we are judged, we are chastened of the Lord that we should not be condemned with the world." The damnation therefore here spoken of, is not the judgment coming upon an ungodly world, even everlasting torment in hell, but the fatherly correction with which God punishes his inconsiderate and negligent people; the same chastisement which is spoken of in the Epistle to the Hebrews, (chap. xii.) which may prevail to the destruction of the body, while yet the spirit shall be saved in the day of the Lord Jesus.

Another suggestion which may deserve notice is, that our Communion Service, with the rest of the Liturgy, was prepared by our Reformers at the time of their own recovery from Popish delusions; when they had in consequence a very lively sense of the danger to which the communicants of that day would be especially exposed, from the effects of their former habits and notions. They had been accustomed to consider the mere outward attendance on the Romish mass, as ac-

accompanied with benefit to their souls, even though they did not forsake the violent, licentious, and other sinful practices in which they had indulged. Our Reformers, therefore, are very strong in depicting the danger of this continuance in sin, while outwardly coming to the Lord's table, but while thus most faithfully warning the men of their day of the especial danger of those times, they have adopted language which, though by no means unsuitable in some cases amongst ourselves, very frequently excites unfounded alarm and apprehension in the minds of the young and serious inquirer.

Should you however still meet with difficulties and perplexities, yet by no means give over the inquiry but seek the advice and assistance of others. Perhaps you are favoured with a Christian parent, a serious relative, a religious friend ; if so, any, or all of these, will gladly advise you to the utmost of their power ; but if not, the minister on whom you attend is bound by the strongest obligations to give you every assistance ; he is directed, when giving notice of the Communion, to

invite those who require further comfort or counsel, to apply unto him; and you may rest assured that every faithful minister will gladly welcome you,—will feel for, and sympathize with you in your difficulties and perplexities,—will by no means regard your application as troublesome, but will rejoice when any of the young persons of his parish, the tender lambs of his flock, are desirous of drawing near to their good and great Shepherd, who spreads a table for them in the wilderness, and who invites them to draw near, that he may lead them to the still waters, cause them to lie down in the green pastures, and refresh and restore them with the riches of his grace. Above all, spread your cares, your doubts, your difficulties, and your perplexities, before God in prayer, and most assuredly shall you receive an answer of peace.

PRAYER.

O Lord, our heavenly Father, whose mercies are over all thy works, and who

revealest thyself in thy holy word, as ready to hear and answer the prayers of all who call upon thee in thy Son's name ; look down in mercy upon me, and for his sake pardon and forgive all my transgressions, and pour down upon me thy Holy Spirit. I am taught in thy word, O Lord, that if any man lack wisdom, he should ask of God : Lord, give unto me true wisdom and understanding ; assist me to understand and profit by the declarations of thy holy word ; may the Holy Spirit lead me into all truth, and so take of the things of Christ and shew them unto me, that I may be enabled to draw near unto thee through him, in thine own appointed way, and find peace and consolation through his atoning sacrifice. Especially assist me, O Lord, while considering these services on which I am now called to attend. Lord, help me, that I may wait upon thee without distraction, and may my views be so enlightened, as to the nature of that ordinance to which I am invited, that I may be fully persuaded in my own mind ; and be enabled to draw near unto thee with true repentance, godly

sorrow for sin, a thankful remembrance of Christ's death, a lively hope of pardon through his blood, a stedfast purpose to live to his glory, a holy composure of spirit, and a grateful admiration of thy love and mercy manifested to me, through my dear Redeemer.

Assist me, O Lord, clearly to perceive the fulness and freeness of thy promises in Christ Jesus. Give me that full conviction of my own guilt and sinfulness, that I may gladly embrace the offer of grace and mercy in him; preserve me from all desponding thoughts, or vain and presumptuous imaginations. Put thy fear and love in my heart; cause me to hate and renounce sin, to flee from every false and evil way, and to give up myself, entirely and unreservedly to thy service. Enable me to draw near with acceptance to thy table, and receive with lively faith the tokens of my Redeemer's dying love. I would come to thy table, O merciful Father, as a humble penitent, confessing mine own guilt and unworthiness. I would come as a believing dependant, resting all my hopes of pardon and acceptance solely

on the merits of Jesus Christ my Lord. I would come as a devoted servant, determining by thy grace to live to thy glory ; beseeching thee to mortify in me every corrupt and sinful affection ; to implant in me every holy disposition ; to produce in me all the fruits of the Spirit, and to grant that henceforth I may in body and soul and spirit live to thy glory, that both with my lips, and in my life I may shew forth thy praise. O remove the veil from mine understanding, take from me all ignorance and hardness of heart ; shew me the way in which I should go ; and may I daily proceed from strength to strength, and from one degree of faith and grace unto more, until, this life ended, I am admitted to the enjoyment of thy blissful presence, to be for ever with the Lord.

Hear, O Lord, and answer, and have mercy upon me, and do more and better for me than I can ask or think for the alone sake and merits of Jesus Christ our Lord, to whom with thee, O Father, and thee, O Holy Ghost, be all honour and glory, world without end, Amen.

IV.

Thursday.

EXCUSES AND OBJECTIONS CONSIDERED.

I WOULD fain hope, my dear young friends, that the consideration of the Scriptural accounts of the Lord's Supper, and the perusal of the exhortations, prayers, praises, and encouraging declarations contained in our communion service, have so far rendered you acquainted with the nature of that holy ordinance, as to obviate many of those objections which are too commonly entertained, and disposed you to conclude that it is indeed a reasonable service. I shall not however be surprised if you are still induced to hesitate; and tempted to postpone an immediate attendance by some objections, which may either have occurred to your

own minds, or been suggested by the conduct, or conversation of others, whom on various accounts you highly esteem. It may not therefore be an unprofitable employment of our time to dwell on some of those excuses, by which many justify their own neglect of this ordinance, and throw a stumbling-block in the way of others. Such excuses may possibly in your case assume the following form.

‘ I see clearly that our Lord Jesus Christ has instituted and appointed this holy ordinance, and that his disciples are required to partake of it; but it is a very solemn ordinance;—I am but young;—many of my relations, friends, and neighbours, who are much better than I am, are afraid of attending, or at least do not think it proper for them to attend; and I am therefore apprehensive lest, if I now come to the Lord’s Table, I should be guilty of presumption; I should by my conduct censure those who stay away; I should therefore exalt myself above others; perhaps appear to profess more than I feel; or bind myself to a stricter life than I really intend or am able to

maintain ; and therefore it may be advisable for me at least, to stay away till I am better prepared ; till I am a few years older ; and am not so much exposed to the temptations with which I am now exercised, but shall be more able to choose my own companions, and have fewer cares and perplexities, and less bustle and business than I am at present compelled to undertake ; I may then hope to be a consistent and regular communicant, to give no occasion to the adversary to speak reproachfully—my fellow worshippers will no longer stand in doubt of me, and I shall not become a stumbling-block to any, or afford a pretext to those who say, they absent themselves because they are not satisfied with the characters of all who attend, and do not see what benefit they obtain by such attendance.’

This brief statement includes all the principal objections and excuses which are from time to time advanced by those who absent themselves from the Lord’s Table ; and yet my dear friends, I am compelled to say that no one of these excuses can justify the neglect of this sacred ordinance ;

they may well lead to serious consideration; to fervent prayer; to impartial self-examination; to more careful and devout preparation; but they cannot justify the neglect of a plain command; nor will they quiet your consciences at a dying hour, or enable you to meet with composure your God and Judge; and I trust you will be led to the same conclusion if only you will carefully consider the subject and patiently attend to the observations which follow.

You are indeed young, and many older than you stay away, and your attendance no doubt will practically censure their neglect; but how far will you carry this? Many older than you live without God in the world—are careless, thoughtless, not to say profane persons; they neglect secret prayer and family religion and the ordinances of God's house; and indulge in conduct, tempers, and conversation, very contrary to the word of God. Unless therefore you go with them to the full extent of their negligence and irreligion, you must at last be brought practically to censure their conduct; and however desire-

ous you may be to retain their good opinion, you must eventually either do violence to your conscience, or be charged with being precise, singular, or righteous over-much. You cannot serve two masters ; in proportion as you neglect or postpone any duty to please men, or through the fear of men, you cease to be the servant of God ; you shrink from taking up your cross, and following your Lord and Master, and are so far ashamed of Christ and of his words.

You are young !—but you are old enough to know what Christ requires of all his disciples ; nor can you find any passage in holy writ which can justify your neglect of this duty. The Jewish youths are accustomed to keep their solemn fasts when only thirteen years of age ; our Lord went up to the Temple when only twelve ; the Church of England expects the attendance of all her Members at the Lord's Table when they are sixteen ; (See Canon 112) the promises of God are especially addressed to young persons ; “ they that seek me early shall find me.” “ Those that be planted in the house of the Lord,

shall flourish in the courts of our God; they shall still bring forth fruit in old age." God indeed magnifies his grace and mercy in recovering some from the error of their ways, and bringing them to the knowledge of his truth, even at an advanced period of life; but the large proportion of steadfast, honourable, consistent, useful characters, will be found among those who have devoted the prime and flower of their days to God's service; who have taken him as the guide of their youth, and have joined themselves to the Lord in a perpetual covenant to be his servants, before they have become entangled in the cares, and businesses, and engagements of life.

O my young friends, remember that you may never live to be old, God calls you to serve him now. "Now is the accepted time; behold, now is the day of salvation." O give up then yourselves to his service, and seek him with humility, faith, and prayer, in this and all his ordinances, that you may find grace to help in every time of need, and be strengthened and assisted for the duties,

the services, or the trials of that state of life to which God may call you.

But you are afraid of binding yourselves to a stricter life than you really intend, or are capable of maintaining among the companions, business, and other engagements and undertakings with which you are now entangled. My dear young friends, when such thoughts occur to your minds, seriously consider what they mean? Do you intend to lead a Christian life or not? You must either be a Christian, or a worldling;—a servant of God, or a servant of the devil; and you cannot be God's servant unless you do indeed determine by his grace to lead a new life—a strict and holy life; unless you seriously purpose and intend to follow the commandments of God and walk from henceforth in his holy ways. Now this you have already promised and engaged in your Baptismal vow, and at your Confirmation; and will you now turn back; and when Christ calls and invites you to come near, will you say, I pray thee have me excused, that I may live a little longer in sin; go a little farther in sin; retain

this or that practice or temper which thou hatest ? No, you will not say this ; nor surely think of acting thus ; you will not renounce your baptismal covenant, it was only your ignorance which led you to advance such an excuse, or entertain such a thought. If you are a Christian you must follow Christ ; you must stedfastly purpose to lead a new life, and to walk in all the commandments and ordinances of the Lord, blameless.

But you fear lest you should not be able to maintain this strict and holy life, and that the consequences of being overcome by temptation after you have drawn near to the Lord's Table will be most awful and without remedy. But my dear young friends, you must never neglect a present duty, through the fear of being hereafter tempted to sin : on the contrary, the danger of being overcome by our spiritual enemies, should make us more diligent, and earnest in seeking for that divine grace which can alone keep us from falling ; and which is promised to them that seek it in God's appointed way : instead therefore of staying away

through fear that you should afterwards fall into sin, you should rather come to the Lord's Table that there you may receive grace and strength to keep you from sin: for the more carefully you prepare for, and the more frequently you partake of, the pledges of your Redeemer's love, the more confidently may you expect and depend on his especial aid, who alone "is able to keep you from falling, and present you before his presence with exceeding joy."

Settle it, my dear young friends, in your minds, that in all cases obedience to the commands of God is safer than disobedience; the path of duty is the path of safety. The gate may be strait, and the road narrow, but it leads unto life; and though, while you are proceeding in that way, you may fall or be cast down, you shall not be destroyed. Peter fell, the very night that he had partaken of the Lord's Supper; he was so overcome that he denied his Lord with oaths and curses; but the Lord had compassion on Peter; he had prayed for him that his faith should not fail; and now at the very trying

moment, while he was in his own extremity, “the Lord turned and looked upon Peter,” filled his heart with penitence, and his eyes with tears; sent him forth mourning with godly sorrow; mercifully restored him again to the paths of peace; renewed his commission; enjoined him to feed the sheep, the lambs, and the flock of Christ, which he purchased with his own blood. I pray for you, my dear young friends, that you may be preserved from falling, and am fully persuaded that if you commit your souls into your Redeemer’s care, however fierce may be the temptations with which you are assailed, he will mercifully watch over you, will give unto you eternal life, you shall never perish, neither shall any pluck you out of his hands.

But, perhaps you may say, ‘I feel myself very unprepared, and very unworthy to approach the Lord’s Table; were I sure that I was what I ought to be, I should rejoice to draw near; but I fear lest, coming as I am, I should be guilty of presumption; and should perhaps throw a stumbling-block in the way of others,

and prevent their attendance ; for I have heard it said by some ‘ I can never think of going to the Lord’s Table, while this and that person, who are no better than they should be, are allowed to attend.’

Now this, my dear young friends, is in my judgment one of the very reasons why you should early draw near to the Lord’s Table ; namely that you may come before you have arrived at that age when your attendance would attract attention and provoke inquiry. At present your conduct and conversation is known only to the members of the family in which you live, and the little circle of acquaintance with which you are connected ; if you have been, as I would hope in the main, dutiful to your parents, diligent in the work and service to which you are called, seriously studying God’s word, regularly attending public worship, and daily seeking the divine blessing in private prayer, your approach to the Lord’s Table will not excite much surprise ; and though possibly it may occasion some unpleasant observations and taunting sneers, yet if these are patiently endured, so far from

your conduct being a stumbling-block to others, it will most probably, under the divine blessing, encourage some of your relations and companions to follow your example.

Remember, however, my dear young friends, that nothing is more clearly prohibited in Holy Writ than the indulgence of a censorious spirit, and the sitting in judgment upon others. There may be, and there doubtless are, among those who attend at the Lord's Table, some very improper characters, though the number of those who thus communicate unworthily is probably very far less than is generally supposed; but your business is with yourselves, and not with others; you cannot search the heart; you know not how truly the person whom you might select as the most unworthy, may be repenting of those very sins which you conceive should keep him at a distance; he may perhaps be almost overwhelmed with grief on account of his ingratitude, his inconsistency, his remaining corruptions; he may very possibly have been bemoaning them before God in secret; or consulting and confer-

ring with his Minister in private; and been encouraged by the assurance that Jesus Christ came to save even the chief of sinners, and will in no wise cast out even the most unworthy. Remember, my dear young friends, it was the poor Publican that “smote upon his breast, saying, God be merciful to me a sinner,” that “went down to his house justified rather than the other;”—and that they are especially offensive unto God who say to others, “stand by thyself, I am holier than thou.” Christ invites all to come unto him—but he has not entrusted to any the power of judging others—it is the duty of all to repent of their sins and draw near in his appointed way—the minister must warn the impenitent to repent before they come; he is to repel them whose lives demonstrate that they are far from God; but when even such declare that they repent, that they desire to return to God, to make restitution, to be reconciled to others, and to lead new lives, his duty is to receive them, to welcome them, to encourage them to approach unto him who “will not break the bruised reed, or

quench the smoking flax ;” and the appearance therefore of such at the Lord’s Table, instead of repelling any, should lead all to pray that multitudes who are still afar off, may, through the Redeemer’s grace and mercy be brought nigh.

Nor can it be presumption in you, my dear young friends, to draw nigh, if only you come to the Lord’s Table with a deep sense of your own unworthiness, with earnest desires for mercy, with unfeigned sorrow for your past offences, with holy purposes and intentions to lead a new life, and with a forgiving and compassionate spirit towards all who have offended you, and all mankind. If such are your views, feelings, desires and purposes, you are indeed prepared and may come with lively faith and humble hope to the Table of your Lord—your hopes must spring from his merit, not your own worthiness ; your dependance must be placed on his atoning sacrifice, not your own righteousness ; your reliance for living henceforth according to his will, must be on his grace, and not on any strength or power, or ability of your own. Fix your eyes and your

hearts upon him, and beseech him who died that you might live, to pour out upon you the abundance of his Holy Spirit, to prepare you by his grace, and enable you to devote yourselves in body and soul to his service.

PRAYER.

O Lord, my God, who art gracious and merciful, slow to anger, abundant in goodness, loving-kindness, and truth, look down in mercy upon me ; pardon, O Lord, for Jesus Christ's sake, all my past transgressions, and especially forgive my neglect of thy gracious invitations ; my disobedience to thy merciful precepts ; and the hard thoughts which I have so often indulged of thee, my gracious and heavenly Father, and which have led me to regard that holy ordinance which thou hast appointed for the strengthening and refreshing of my soul, with apprehension and alarm, instead of eagerly and cheerfully embracing every opportunity of drawing near unto Thee.

Forgive, O Lord, I humbly beseech thee, this and all my other transgressions ; graciously vouchsafe unto me thine Holy Spirit, and lead me in all thy righteous ways. Remove from my mind those perplexing doubts and harassing apprehensions with which I have been disturbed ; enable me to see clearly the path of duty, and stedfastly and determinately to proceed in the right way. Lord, give me a single eye, that I may not be drawn aside through the love of the world, the fear of men, or the prevalence of evil examples, but may I have grace to follow thee fully. I am, indeed, young in years, but thou hast called many younger than I to their last home, and I know not how long thou mayest see fit to spare me. Lord, help me, that whilst I live I may live unto thee, and when I die may I die unto thee ; that so living or dying I may be thine. I see indeed, O Lord, that too many are living contrary to thy mind and will : look in mercy upon them, and give unto them true repentance, that they may be converted and saved : but, O Lord, keep me from following their evil ways ; may

I obey thee rather than man, and though I cannot but see and hear many things which are wrong, help me so to watch over my thoughts, and tempers, and whole conduct and conversation, that I may, by thy grace, be preserved from every evil way. Keep me, O Lord, from giving way to censoriousness or spiritual pride; may I never presume to sit in judgment upon others; but grant, O Lord, that while I endeavour to act differently from some who are older than myself, I may yet act humbly, modestly, submissively, and meekly, so that I may not give unnecessary offence, or expose the religion which I profess to censure or reproach. May I never presume to disobey thy plain commands; but while thou art speaking, O enable me always to hear, and obey thy holy will; thou invitest and commandest me to draw near to thy table. Lord, I come, pardon my weakness and ignorance—my remaining fears and apprehensions,—be merciful to me, O Lord, be merciful unto me, who desire to do thy will, and yet am afraid of thy judgments. Thou hast said, thou wilt not break the

bruised reed, nor quench the smoking flax ; O, look in mercy upon me, who am weak and worthless, and whom thou mightest justly reject ; strengthen me with strength in my soul ; give me living faith in thy promises ; help me to approach unto thee through thine own dear Son, whom thou hast revealed unto me as a merciful and compassionate High Priest, who in that he was himself tempted, knoweth how to succour them that are tempted. Blessed be thy name, that thou hast provided for us sinners such an all-prevailing Advocate and Intercessor ; Lord, I would come unto thee through him ; for his sake vouchsafe to hear my prayers ; to accept my person and services. Clothe me, O Lord, with his righteousness ; pour out upon me the riches of thy grace. Subdue in me the power of sin, mortify every remaining corruption, and enable me to lead a new life to the praise and glory of thy name. O grant that while coming to thy table, and partaking of the outward visible signs and pledges of my Redeemer's love, my soul may be refreshed with his abundant grace and mercy ; may I be thus strengthened

for every duty, work, and service ; experience largely the consolations of thy people here ; and may I and all my fellow-communicants, and all who are near and dear unto me, be all together brought to the enjoyment of thy blissful presence in glory for ever ; for the alone sake and merits of Jesus Christ, my Lord and Saviour. Amen.

V.

Friday.

THE PREPARATION.

I TRUST, my dear young friends, that the perusal of the preceding pages has rendered you acquainted with the scriptural account of the Lord's Supper ; with the general nature of those confessions, prayers, praises, and encouraging declarations, which you will be called upon to adopt while coming to that ordinance, and with the insufficiency of all those reasons, which you might at one time have been disposed to advance, for postponing or neglecting to communicate. There is, however, still one point, and that of considerable importance, with which you may perhaps be very imperfectly acquainted ; namely, The preparation required of those who come to

the Lord's Supper. This has indeed been glanced at in former parts of this address ; and several important particulars have in some measure been anticipated ; yet still, as the benefits of attending on the Lord's Table are inseparably connected with your drawing near in a suitable manner, it seems desirable that I should enter more fully on this interesting topic.

The directions given us on this subject in the Word of God are exceedingly brief. The disciples partook of this ordinance at the period of its institution, without any previous notice or preparation. They had indeed made the customary preparation for eating the Passover ; but they had no clear ideas of the great event of which the Passover was a type, and to which the Lord's Supper referred, at the time when they first received the tokens of their Redeemer's dying love. The early converts to Christianity appear to have been admitted to the Lord's Table immediately upon their baptism ; nor were either of these ordinances delayed or postponed until the new convert was more fully instructed, or more firmly established in the faith of Christ. The

postponing of baptism for weeks and months after a credible profession of faith in Christianity; and the interposing any delay after Baptism, when the party has arrived at years of discretion; or the requiring of any examination by deacons, communicants, or other church members, before a baptized person is admitted to the Lord's Supper, or to full church membership, are alike destitute of any scriptural precedent; and however plausible they may at first sight appear, have yet been productive of serious evils in the Church of Christ.

There are only two passages in Holy Writ which have any reference to this preparation. The first is the direction of our Lord, "When thou bringest thy gift to the altar, and there rememberest that thy brother hath aught against thee, leave there thy gift before the altar, and go thy way: first be reconciled to thy brother, and then come and offer thy gift." (Matt. v. 23, 24.) It is, however, exceedingly doubtful whether this passage has any reference to sacramental preparation. It clearly intimates the indispensable neces-

sity of reconciliation, restitution, and making amends to those we have injured, before we or our unworthy services can be accepted of our heavenly Father; and it is therefore important to keep this passage in view whenever we attempt to draw near to God in any of his ordinances; but it is no way peculiarly applicable to the Lord's Supper. The other passage is, "Let a man examine himself, and so let him eat of that bread and drink of that cup." (1 Cor. xi. 28.) And hence we are taught in our Catechism, that it is required of those who come to the Lord's Supper, 'To examine themselves, whether they repent them truly of their former sins, stedfastly purposing to lead a new life; have a lively faith in God's mercy through Christ, with a thankful remembrance of his death, and be in charity with all men: ' and you are therefore called upon in the exhortation before the Sacrament, 'to search and examine your own consciences, and that not lightly, and after the manner of dissemblers with God: '—'To examine your lives and conversations by the rule of God's commandments; and whereinsoever

ye shall perceive yourselves to have offended, either by will, word, or deed, there to bewail your own sinfulness, and to confess yourselves to Almighty God, with full purpose of amendment of life ;—to reconcile yourselves to your neighbours ;—to make restitution for wrongs and injuries ;—and to forgive those who have offended you.'

Such is the preparation required of those who are desirous of approaching to the Lord's Table ;—these short and plain directions have frequently indeed been extended to a very inconvenient length, and the communicant has been wearied and distracted by numerous questions and lengthened inquiries, with reference to every point of faith and practice ; until his mind has been so disturbed and perplexed as to shrink with alarm and despondency from an ordinance requiring such wearisome and painful preparation. Far be it from me to encourage any to approach carelessly or inconsiderately to the Lord's Table, while yet I express my disapprobation of the protracted and minute inquiries which have been so often

recommended. Plain, however, as the directions given by our Church appear to my own mind, it is not impossible that some of you, my young friends, may require additional explanation, and if the following brief observations afford you any assistance in your preparation, I shall most unfeignedly rejoice.

You are called upon ‘to examine yourselves, whether you truly repent of your former sins.’ The Scripture informs us, “there is not a just man upon earth, that doeth good and sinneth not.” “In many things we offend all.” Neither the word of God, nor the Church to which we belong, affords any countenance to the idea, that only perfect characters are to come to the Lord’s Table; on the contrary, it is uniformly implied, that even the best of men in this imperfect state have daily need of renewed repentance, and you are therefore called upon to inquire whether indeed you truly repent;—that is, whether you are truly sorry for the sins you have committed; whether you are concerned on account of their number; wish them undone; regard them with

shame and abhorrence ; and desire and determine by God's grace, no longer to live in the commission of them or any other transgressions. In order thus to examine yourselves, you are to think over your past life, and especially endeavour to recollect what your conduct has recently been ; you are to consider how that conduct appears in the sight of Almighty God, who searches the heart, and observes every hidden motive and every secret purpose ; and you are to confess before him, those transgressions which you have reason to conceive are especially offensive to the divine majesty.

In order to form a right judgment, you must compare your conduct with the requirements of God's holy law,—for instance, when you read that “ the Lord will not hold him guiltless who taketh his name in vain,” consider how often you have made mention of the names of God, and Lord, and Christ, without seriously thinking whom you were speaking of : how often you may have exclaimed ‘ good God ! ’ or ‘ Lord Christ ! ’ in a light and trifling manner : how often you have read

God's word, or taken his name upon your lips in prayer or singing hymns, without recollecting what you were about; and beseech God to forgive you such vain and thoughtless conduct. So again when you read the commandment to "keep holy the sabbath day," consider how your Sundays have been spent—how often has the rest from your worldly businesses been abused to sloth and idleness, or vain and unprofitable conversation or amusement; how frequently has that time on the Lord's day been employed in pleasure-taking, company, perhaps travelling or feasting, which ought to have been spent in God's service, in worshipping him in his house; in reading or learning his holy word; in secret or family prayer; in visiting the sick and afflicted, or in other holy pursuits and avocations. When you read, or hear the fifth commandment read, think how often you have been guilty of disobeying either your father or your mother; how often you have murmured at their reasonable commands, or gone contrary to their known desires; how often you have thought or spoken of them with disrespect,

or withheld from them that cheerful and ready relief and assistance which you might have afforded. In short, whenever the commandments are read, consider wherein you have offended against any of them; often read over your duty to God and to your neighbour, as admirably summed up in the Church Catechism; and then confess before Almighty God in secret those particular offences and failings which occur to your recollection, and beseech, for Jesus Christ's sake, his gracious and merciful forgiveness.

You are to examine also 'whether you stedfastly purpose to lead a new life;' not only whether you are ashamed and grieved on account of the past sins you have committed, but whether you are determined by God's help to renounce and forsake them, —to relinquish, not merely those sins which may interfere with your interest or reputation among men, but also those which are pleasing and profitable—not only to perform those duties and adopt those practices which are fashionable and common, but those also which, though required in the word of God, are considered by many as

of small or secondary importance, or perhaps censured as precise and formal;—and whether you thus purpose to serve and please God not merely for a brief and limited period, but entirely and unreservedly, even to the end of your days. This settled and determined purpose of obedience is inseparably connected with, and may be considered a part of true repentance. All the professed sorrow for sin which is unaccompanied with holy determination for the future, must be regarded as hypocritical, and if we are secretly purposing at some future period, as for instance when the sacrament is over, to adopt any unlawful practice, conform to any evil example, or indulge in any sinful pleasure, we cannot be said either truly to repent of our sins, or sincerely to purpose leading a new life.

You are to examine further ‘whether you have a lively faith of God’s mercy through Christ, with a thankful remembrance of his death.’ That is, whether you do indeed receive as true the declarations of Almighty God concerning his Son—namely, that “God so loved the world

that he gave his only-begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life." "That this is a faithful saying, and worthy of all acceptation, that Jesus Christ came into the world to save sinners." That, as under the Jewish law, the sins of the transgressor were supposed to be laid on the pure and spotless sacrifice, so our iniquities were really laid upon Jesus Christ. That "he bare our sins in his own body on the tree,"—that the Lord laid upon him the iniquities of us all. And that in consequence of his perfect sacrifice, all who believe, are through him freely justified from all things.

If you have this lively faith in God's mercy through Christ, you will be habitually depending on the Saviour's merits;—you will derive comfort, not from thinking of your own goodness, but from remembering the abundant merits and satisfaction of Jesus Christ; you will daily seek forgiveness for the sake of Christ—acceptance through the intercession of Christ; the grace of the Holy Spirit according to the promise of Christ, and you will

therefore adore the love and mercy which provided such an Almighty Saviour and such a complete and perfect redemption for lost and perishing sinners. You will feel daily more and more a conviction that while there is salvation in no other way, there is an all-sufficient redemption provided in Christ,—you will admire the loving-kindness of God in providing such a Saviour,—long and pray for an interest in him,—fear coming short of his mercy, and seek daily for pardon and peace through his precious blood-shedding. You may have many doubts and fears whether you are really accepted and saved in Christ; but if you see such a suitableness in his sacrifice as earnestly to pray for mercy through him; you shall most assuredly not be disappointed of your hope; and while such is the desire of your soul, you are indeed prepared to come to the Lord's Table.

The last point of inquiry is, whether you are in charity with all men, that is, whether you are living in love and peace; whether you forgive those who have in any way offended you—not treasuring up



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in your memory their hard speeches, nor envying their prosperity, nor rejoicing when you hear of their losses, or misfortunes, nor intending to mortify or vex them when you have opportunity; but whether you indeed desire that their offences against God may be forgiven, that they may find mercy through Christ, and that together with you, they, however guilty and unworthy, may be admitted to heavenly felicity, through the Redeemer's atoning sacrifice and abundant grace; and whether you manifest this forgiving and charitable spirit by your kindness and forbearance on all occasions, and by assisting and supporting them under their afflictions, and thus endeavouring to render good for evil, and to win them by love to seek for mercy and grace through Jesus Christ.

PRAYER.

O Lord, my 'God, thou hast searched me and known me; thou knowest my down sitting and my uprising, and understandest my thoughts afar off; thou art

acquainted with all my ways, and there is not a word in my tongue, but lo! O Lord, thou knowest it altogether. Have mercy upon me, O Lord, have mercy upon me. Forgive, O heavenly Father, I humbly beseech thee, for Jesus Christ's sake, all my transgressions which in thought, in word, or in deed, I have committed, let them not appear against me in judgment to condemn me, but may they be indeed so blotted out of the book of thy remembrance, that I, though in myself most unworthy, may be graciously owned and accepted of thee as one of thy dear children, through the Son of thy love, in whom thou art well pleased.

Assist me, O Lord, I humbly beseech thee, by the gracious influences of thine Holy Spirit, that I may be enabled to examine myself as in thy sight, and so repent me truly of all my sins, that I may approach aright to thy table. I have, alas! in numerous instances transgressed against thy divine majesty. I have not loved thee, my God, with all my heart, and mind, and soul, and strength; nor have I loved my neighbour as myself.

My heart condemns me, O Lord, of many transgressions against thee, and yet how small a portion of mine iniquities can I now call to mind ; yet they are all naked and open unto thee, with whom I have to do, they are all written in the book of thy remembrance. Enter not into judgment with me, O Lord, for in thy sight I cannot be justified. I have indeed been mercifully preserved from some gross and scandalous sins into which others have fallen ; and I would praise thine holy name for the affectionate care and kind restraint, with which my parents and friends have watched over my tender years, and kept me out of the way of many snares and evils by which I might have been cast down and destroyed. And yet, O Lord, when I look back on my past life, and see how often I have murmured at these very restraints ; how reluctantly I have attended to the instructions with which I have been favoured ; how frequently I have neglected thy word, wasted or profaned thy sabbaths, and taken thy holy name in vain,—I see that nothing but thy grace and mercy has kept me from running to most fearful lengths in iniquity ;

and am constrained to confess before thee the grievous transgressions which I have committed against light and knowledge, notwithstanding early instructions, warnings, and advantages. Lay not, O Lord, I humbly beseech thee, these sins to my charge ; but give me true repentance and godly sorrow for sin. I am ashamed, O Lord, when I look back and consider the ungrateful returns which I have made for the abundant mercies I have received, and I do humbly purpose, by thy grace, to lead a new life to the glory of thy name. Lord, help me to love thy word, to love thy house, to keep holy thy day, to reverence thy name, to honour and obey my parents, tutors, spiritual pastors, and masters : keep me, O Lord, by thy grace, from every false and evil way. Preserve me from those temptations by which I have in times past been overcome, and from all those assaults of the great enemy of souls, by which persons in riper years are so often overpowered ; O put thy fear into my heart, and may I cleave close unto thee, and daily live under a deep sense of thine all-seeing eye. Forgive all my of-

fences against others ; all my hasty, unkind, contentious, and slanderous words ; pardon all my sinful and unguarded tempers ; put thy grace in my heart, and render me meek, compassionate, gentle, and forgiving, after the example of my Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ.

Blessed be thy name, O Lord, for the revelation of thy grace and mercy in him. Help me, O heavenly Father, simply and entirely to depend on his atoning sacrifice. I know, O Lord, that there is no other name given among men, by which we can be saved, but only the name of Jesus ; Lord, help me to believe on him to the salvation of my soul. May my faith be living, active, fruitful in all good words and works ; and may it thus be daily more and more evident that I am indeed savingly united unto Christ, by walking as he walked, and copying his holy and perfect example.

And, Lord, grant that I may be in charity with all men : O let me not deceive myself with a name to live, while I am dead, nor ever suppose that I can love thee, while I am at enmity with my breth-

ren. Forgive, O Lord, all who have at any time injured or offended me ; give them true repentance of all their sins ; bring them to the saving knowledge of thy truth ; may they live to thy praise and glory on earth, and, Lord, grant that we may meet together in heaven.

And now, O Lord, look in mercy upon me : I desire to draw near to thy table : graciously vouchsafe to receive and own, to accept and bless me ; speak peace to my conscience through the atoning blood. While I receive the outward and visible signs of my Redeemer's dying love, may my faith be increased, my hope enlivened, my hatred of sin be strengthened ; my holy desires and purposes confirmed, and thus may this ordinance of thine appointment indeed conduce to the strengthening and refreshing of my soul, that I may become entirely and unreservedly thy servant.

O Lord assist, direct and bless me ; forgive the imperfection of my services ; the wanderings of my prayers, the defects of my examination. Search me, O God, and know my heart ; try me and know my

thoughts ; and see if there be any wicked way in me, and lead me in the way everlasting. I come unto thee encouraged by the promises of thy word ; I cast myself at thy feet seeking for mercy through Christ. I devote myself to thee at thy Table as thy servant. Lord accept the sacrifice—make me thine in body, in soul and spirit. Keep me thine and that for ever ; and grant O merciful Father, that I may be indeed numbered with those, who shall eat bread in the kingdom of God, and go no more out for ever. Hear, O God, and answer and bless for Jesus Christ's sake my Lord and Saviour ; Amen and Amen.

VI.

Saturday.

UNAVOIDABLE INTERRUPTIONS.

AND now, my dear young friends, we are arrived at the last day of the week, and if spared till to-morrow I hope to meet you at the Table of the Lord. Yet perhaps even at the present moment you feel some hesitation and are perplexed with some difficulties which almost make you pause ; your fears and apprehensions very possibly revive ; some mysterious doubts concerning the nature of the ordinance ; the obligation which requires your attendance ; the suitableness of your preparation ; the consequences of your approaching unprepared ; vex and disquiet your mind. Did I know the exact nature of the difficulty with which you are assailed

and disturbed, I might possibly suggest more appropriate relief ; but at present, I can only refer you to what I have already written, on each of these points, in the preceding pages ; and especially invite you, if you meet not there, with a satisfactory answer, to confer either with some Christian friend, or which may prove more effectual, with the Minister under whose care you are providentially placed.

It not however unfrequently happens, that when persons first comply with the command of their Lord, and draw near to his Table ; they are very far from attaining that entire composure which is every way desirable ; and generally speaking, the longer they delay their approach, the greater perplexity they experience.

Endeavour therefore, to collect your scattered thoughts, and rest on some few general principles. Say to yourself, this is our Lord Jesus Christ's own invitation ; he commands all to come, he promises to be with those who meet in his name ; I need his salvation, for I am a poor weak guilty sinner ; I desire his salvation ; I wish to receive him as my Saviour ;

Lord, I come ; draw me through thy most precious blood ;—clothe me in thy perfect righteousness, feed me with the bread of life ; strengthen me that I may resist every enemy, and overcome every temptation ; speak peace to my soul, and enable me to rejoice in hope of the glory of God.

We walk by faith not by sight ? and we are therefore fully to believe that God's promises will be fulfilled, though we see not how they are to be accomplished, and feel many things different or contrary to what we expected. God has said, they that seek shall find, while therefore you seek him in this his ordinance, you may rest assured that you shall find him to your everlasting benefit, and may well check your rising fears with the recollection that God is faithful, that he delighteth in mercy, that the promise shall come ; though it tarry, wait for it ; wait on the Lord ; be of good courage and he shall strengthen thine heart ; wait I say on the Lord.

There are however some perplexing difficulties which arise out of the particular situations that individuals occupy ; some

of these are occasioned by apparently trifling causes, and such as at first sight appear unworthy of notice; and yet they occasion great annoyance; "behold how great a matter a little fire kindleth:" these difficulties are often increased by the anxiety of the young communicant to come in a perfectly prepared and quiet frame of mind; while yet unforeseen circumstances arise, to interfere with that preparation, and materially to disturb that tranquillity, so as at times to produce an impression on the mind that while in this situation I can never properly come to the Lord's Table.

These difficulties are usually felt more severely in those cases where the Lord's Supper is only administered on the greater Festivals, Easter, Whitsuntide and Christmas. On those occasions when the young communicant would anxiously desire more time for retirement, meditation, self-examination and prayer, it not unfrequently happens, that there is more than usual to be attended to in the family; the younger children are at home from School; Relations and Friends assemble from different quarters; there is company ex-

pected, and certain preparations must be made ; and perhaps, there is a good deal of excitement and irritability in various members of the family, all which is exceedingly unfavourable to that composed, and quiet mind at which the young communicant aims.

Now if such should be your case, my young friends, endeavour to remember—the Lord knoweth my place, my situation, my circumstances : I am a son, a daughter, a brother, or sister, a servant : I must honour and obey those who are placed over me : I must endeavour to redeem time by early rising, by activity, by forethought and attention. I must strive, that, while my hands are employed in worldly concerns, my heart be engaged with God. If others are sharp and irritable, I must seek for grace to be patient, submissive and forbearing. And though you may not have time to prepare as you would wish, yet if unavoidable hindrances and impediments arise, ever remember that the Lord will have mercy and not sacrifice ; and that the few moments you can snatch from rest or business

may oftentimes be so improved as to bring down abundant blessings and consolations on your soul. Attendance on divine ordinances is expressly enjoined ; the extent of previous preparation is left to each individual's determination, and must vary exceedingly according to circumstances. The slave who has not a moment to call his own, will as assuredly be accepted of a God of mercy, as the more favoured individual whose time is unreservedly at his own disposal.

Do not however misunderstand me, my dear young friends, as at all justifying a careless or negligent approach to the Lord's Table. It is your duty to obey Christ's command, and receive the tokens of his dying love. It is your duty to prepare to the best of your knowledge and ability for that reception. If the Saturday is with you, as with many a busy day ; or if you foresee that the Saturday before the Communion will bring with it more impediments than usual, you must endeavour to redeem time at an early period of the week for that self-examination and preparation which a well-informed conscience

teaches you ought to be used. And however painful the necessity may be for this forethought and consideration, yet if habitually exercised it will produce a beneficial effect on your Christian character, and may very materially contribute to your temporal comfort and prosperity. Inconsideration, forgetfulness, and putting off to a future period what may as well be done at the present moment, are ruinous to the bodies, souls, and circumstances of multitudes. Neglect not therefore your approach to the Lord's Table though you may not be in all respects prepared as you might desire; but let the recollection of the unforeseen hindrances you have experienced on the present occasion, induce you to embrace every opportunity of meditating on the nature of this ordinance, and of cultivating those holy affections, and that devout and heavenly state of mind which may justify your attendance at the Lord's Table whenever opportunity may offer, even though unlooked for events may entirely preclude any special preparation. The Christian should cultivate habitual preparation for death and judg-

ment ; if ready to meet his Lord and Master, at whatsoever hour he may come, he is also ready to draw near to him in his ordinances, and may therefore well approach to his heavenly Master's Table with renewed repentance, faith and devotion, though he has been unable to devote any special season for self-examination and preparation.

PRAYER.

O Lord, my heavenly Father, look down in mercy upon me ; thou knowest my difficulties, hindrances, and perplexities. O be merciful unto me as thou usest to be to those who love thy name. Lord, I desire to approach to thy Table ; I would come unto thy mercy-seat with a prepared heart, with deep repentance, living faith, lively hope, and fervent charity. I would say to all worldly cares and circumstances, stand here by yourselves while I go and worship the Lord yonder ; but alas ! I feel sore let and hindered in running my Christian race.

—I find vain, foolish, and perplexing thoughts arising in my mind and disturbing and interrupting my tranquillity; and am sometimes reminded of him who said, Instead of peace I find bitterness: but Lord, I come unto thee, have mercy upon me; accept me through the Son of thy love, the Lord Jesus. Take me, weak, guilty, unworthy as I am; for his sake, pardon, cleanse, strengthen, sanctify me; and make me wholly and entirely thine. Assist me to draw near unto thee, and to wait upon thee without distraction. O thou good Lord, pardon me, who desire to prepare my heart to seek thee, the God of my Fathers; and graciously accept me, though not cleansed according to the purification of the sanctuary. Mercifully vouchsafe to meet with and bless me: strengthen me with strength in my soul: give me a clear perception of thy love, and grace, and mercy. Pour down upon me thine Holy Spirit, and fill my heart with holy peace, heavenly composure and abiding consolation. O, grant that this ordinance to which I now approach with many apprehensions and misgivings, may

indeed be effectual to the strengthening and refreshing of my soul, and may animate me to renewed devotion of heart, and more unreserved obedience. O pour down upon me the riches of thy grace, and make me truly, unreservedly, and entirely thine.

Inflame my heart with love to thy holy name; and help me to engage with lively affections in the services of thine house. Remove far from me all coldness, formality, vain thoughts, and worldly imaginations. Enable me to meditate on thy majesty, wisdom, loving-kindness, and mercy; and above all, on those displays of thine exceeding grace manifested unto us through Jesus Christ. Lord, I desire to contemplate that great mystery God manifest in the flesh; to dwell upon that love which led the Saviour to empty himself of the glory which he had before the world was, and to become man for us men and our salvation. Blessed be thy name, O God, for giving thy Son to die for our sinful race. Adored be that love and compassion which caused our adorable redeemer to undergo that load of suffering which he sustained on the cross. Praised and bless-

ed be thy name, O Heavenly Comforter, for revealing to us the Saviour's love, and making us willing to embrace this great salvation. O vouchsafe thy presence with me, assure me of thy loving-kindness ; speak peace to my conscience through the atoning blood ; dispel every fear, and help me to rejoice in hope of the glory of God.

Lord, I would be thine, and thine alone. Come, take possession of me by thy grace. Reign and rule in my heart : sanctify all my desires and affections, quicken and animate me for every service and duty ; mortify and subdue in me all corrupt affections. Seal me for thine own, and grant, O Lord, that I may be henceforth wholly and entirely thine.

Hear, O God, and answer, and have mercy upon me, for Jesus Christ's sake, my Lord and Saviour. Amen.

VII.

Sunday.

COMPANION TO THE ALTAR.

PRAYER.

O LORD, my God, I desire to praise and bless thine holy name for sparing and preserving me to behold the light of this thine own day, and for permitting and encouraging me to draw near unto thee upon a mercy-seat. O continue thy loving kindness towards me, and pour down upon me the abundant influences of thine Holy Spirit; assist me to worship thee with reverence and godly fear; fill my heart with love, gratitude, and praise for all thy mercies, and especially for thine exceeding love in the gift of thy dear Son

Jesus Christ. Enable me to read, to hear, and meditate upon thy holy word, and may I profit by the ordinances of thine house. Be with all thy ministering servants and especially grant that those under whom I am placed, may be directed so to preach thine holy word, that it may be profitable to my own soul, and the souls of all who shall worship together with me in thine house.

Vouchsafe I beseech thee thine especial presence with me while attempting to draw near to thy table. O Lord, I desire to come in obedience to thy command. I feel unworthy to approach unto thee; and though I have attempted in some measure to prepare and stir up my heart to seek thee, and have endeavoured to examine myself according to the rules of thy holy word and the instructions with which I am favoured; I yet feel myself most unworthy and imperfect. Lord, pardon all my sins; pardon the imperfection of my services; pardon the wanderings of my prayers, the coldness of my affections, and every thing which thy pure and holy eyes see amiss or

defective in me. Mercifully accept me through the sacrifice of thine own dear Son, may his blood cleanse me from all sin; for his sake pour down upon me thine Holy Spirit; enlighten mine understanding that I may know thy mind and will; sanctify mine affections and dispose my heart to choose those things which are pleasing in thy sight. Give me especially a clear and lively apprehension of the inestimable blessings purchased and procured for perishing sinners through the Redeemer's sufferings and death; and grant that whilst I behold and receive the tokens of his dying love, my soul may go forth after him, in the exercise of true repentance, godly sorrow for sin, humble faith and dependance on his merits; holy devotedness to thy service, and fervent love and charity towards all men. O increase my knowledge; enliven and strengthen my faith; animate my hope; and assist and enable me to give up myself, my body, and soul, and all I have and am to thy service, that I may glorify thee here and reign with thee for ever. Hear, O my God, and answer, and have

mercy upon me for Jesus Christ's sake, in whose name and words I further call upon thee, saying :

Our Father, &c.

If you have time at your disposal, you may employ it with great advantage in reading and meditating on some of the following passages of holy writ; beware, however, of prolonging your private devotions, so as to interfere with those duties to which you are called in the family, lest you should at last be pressed for time, and be either too late at church, or proceed there in such haste as to disturb, harass and perplex your mind, and unfit you for drawing near to God with tranquillity and composure of spirit.

Gen. xxii. Numb. xxi. 6—9, and John iii. 14. Psalm xxiii. xxvi. xxvii. xxxii. xlii. xliii. xlvi. li. lxxi. xci. ciii. cxvi. cxxv. Isa. vi. 5—7. xii. xxv. xl. xliii. xliv. liii. lv. Matt. xxvi. xxvii. Mark xiv. xv. Luke i. 68—80. xi. 1—13. xv. xviii. 1—

16: xxii: xxiii: xxiv. John i. 29—51: iii. vi. x. xiv. xv. xvi. xvii. xviii. xix. xx. xxi. Acts viii. 26—40. Rom. v. vi. viii. xii. 1 Cor. xi. 2 Cor. v. Ephes. i. ii. Phil. i. ii. iv. Col. iii. 1 Thess. i. v. Heb. vi. 10—20. vii. 21—28. ix. 24—28. xii. 1 Peter i. 13—25. 1 John i. ii. iii. Rev. i. 4—7. viii. 9—17. xxi. xxii.

THE

ADMINISTRATION OF THE LORD'S SUPPER,

or, Holy Communion.

¶ *So many as intend to be partakers of the holy Communion shall signify their names to the Curate, at least some time the day before.*

¶ *And if any of those be an open and notorious evil liver, or have done any wrong to his neighbours, by word or deed, so that the Congregation be thereby offended; the Curate, having knowledge thereof, shall call him and advertise him, that in any wise he presume not to come to the Lord's Table, until he hath openly declared himself to have truly repented and amended his former naughty life, that the Congregation may thereby be satisfied, which before were offended; and that he hath recompensed the parties, to whom he hath done wrong; or at least declare himself to be in full purpose so to do, as soon as he conveniently may.*

¶ *The same order shall the Curate use with those betwixt whom he perceiveth malice and hatred to reign ; not suffering them to be partakers of the Lord's Table, until he know them to be reconciled. And if one of the parties so at variance be content to forgive, from the bottom of his heart, all that the other hath trespassed against him, and to make amends for that he himself hath offended ; and the other party will not be persuaded to a godly unity, but remain still in his frowardness and malice : the Minister in that case ought to admit the penitent person to the holy Communion, and not him that is obstinate. Provided that every Minister, so repelling any, shall be obliged to give an account of the same to the Ordinary within fourteen days after at the farthest. And the Ordinary shall proceed against the offending person according to the Canon.*

These directions, usually called Rubrics, are, generally speaking, very much neglected ; it is, however, desirable that they should be, as far as possible, observed ; and you will therefore do well, if practicable, to mention your intention of attending at the Lord's table, to your minister in such time as may enable him to suggest, and you to derive advantage from, any intimations which he may think proper to

give. The directions for repelling improper characters, are from time to time, acted upon, by conscientious ministers ; as, however, such intimations are usually given by the clergyman in private, and as the parties repelled have generally prudence enough to keep their own secret, many ignorantly conclude that characters of all descriptions are admitted to the Lord's table, without check or discrimination. The minister's difficulty, in the present day, is, however, to induce those to attend who are tempted to stay away, rather than to repel those who are desirous to come.

Remember your grand concern is between God and your own soul ; beware of judging and condemning others, whether ministers or fellow-christians, and endeavour therefore to cultivate the "charity which hopeth all things;" you may be mistaken in your views of a fellow-worshipper's character and conduct ; or the minister may not possess that knowledge of the individual which you possess ; or the line of conduct which you think the clergyman ought to adopt, may not appear

to him consistent with the word of God ; or, what appears at first sight, in the Rubric, a very plain direction, may involve serious consequences, which should render a minister very cautious and induce him to act only in those cases where conscience absolutely requires him to proceed. If, therefore, any doubts, with respect to the conduct of others, arise in your minds, endeavour to dismiss them from your thoughts, and lift up your heart in prayer to Almighty God to give wisdom and grace to your minister, fellow-worshippers, and yourself, that they may ‘ both perceive and know what things they ought to do, and also may have grace and power faithfully to fulfil the same, through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.’

An interval usually occurs after the sermon, during which, those who do not intend to communicate, withdraw ; and in some cases, the communicants proceed from their pews to seats in the chancel. As soon therefore, as the church is sufficiently cleared, take your place, either in your own seat or in one more convenient,

according to the usual custom of the place, and seek the divine presence and blessing by some appropriate prayer. When the congregation is large, the interval is sometimes extended to an inconvenient length; be it however more or less, endeavour to collect your thoughts, by reflecting on what you have heard, meditating on the ordinance to which you are now about to approach, and lifting up your heart in prayer to God. Be not, however anxious to make use of every petition or meditation inserted in this, or any similar book; but break off your private devotions when the minister commences, and endeavour to go along with him with full purpose of heart, from one part of the service to another.

PRAYER.

O Lord, my God, look down in mercy upon me, who am now about to approach unto thy table, and receive the tokens of my Redeemer's dying love; for his sake, O Lord, vouchsafe to pardon all my sins, to accept my person and services, to pour

down upon me thine Holy Spirit ; to enlighten mine understanding, and fill my heart with joy and peace in believing. Have mercy upon me, notwithstanding my manifold unworthiness ; forgive the defects of my holiest services, the imperfection of my present preparation, and all those things of which my conscience is afraid ; accept me and all my fellow-worshippers, through the worthiness of thy dear Son ; and grant that our souls may be refreshed and strengthened by the body and blood of Christ, as our bodies are by the bread and wine, and that finally through the Redeemer's all-atoning merits, and all-prevailing intercession, we may be admitted to the marriage supper of the Lamb, and be for ever with the Lord. Hear me, O my God, for Jesus Christ's sake, my Lord and Saviour. Amen.

When the minister has taken his place at the Lord's table, he commences the service by reading one or more of the following sentences, while the alms and oblations of the congregation are collected

by suitable persons. Formerly the ministers received themselves, a portion of the offerings, and some of the sentences obviously refer to their claims of temporal support. At present, however, the whole of the money collected is distributed to the poor, at the discretion of the minister and churchwardens, and consequently the sentences referring to the duty of providing for ministers are in many cases uniformly omitted. While the churchwardens, &c. are employed in the collection, meditate on the sentences as they are read, and endeavour, as you have time, to found upon each, some appropriate petition.

¶ *Then shall the Priest return to the Lord's table, and begin the Offertory, saying one or more of these sentences following, as he thinketh most convenient in his discretion.*

Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father which is in heaven.
Matthew v.

Lord, help me thus to let my light shine before men; keep me from strife or vain glory; make me humble, teachable, pa-

tient, gentle, and compassionate, after the example of my Lord and Master. May I always walk as in thy sight, remember the vows of God which are upon me, and bring forth the fruits of the Spirit, to the glory of thy holy name.

Lay not up for yourselves treasure upon the earth, where the rust and moth doth corrupt, and where thieves break through and steal; but lay up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where neither rust nor moth doth corrupt, and where thieves do not break through and steal. *Matt. vi.*

Enable me, O Lord, ever to perceive the vanity and uncertainty of all earthly treasures and possessions, and to set mine affections on things above. Keep me from anxiously desiring, covetously hoarding up, or improvidently wasting the bounties of thy providence; but may I sit loose to the world and all its possessions and enjoyments; diligently endeavour to promote to the utmost of my ability the welfare of my fellow-creatures, and daily and earnestly seek for those better and abiding treasures which are at thy right hand for ever.

Whatsoever ye would that men should do unto you, even so do unto them, for this is the law and the prophets. *Matt. vii.*

Lord, I would that others should live with me in love and peace; that they should help and comfort me when I am in distress, that they should contribute to my support and relief when poor and afflicted. O help me to manifest that love and kindness to those who are in distress, and accept the offering which I now devote to the relief of thine afflicted people.

Not every one that saith unto me, Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of heaven, but he that doeth the will of my Father which is in heaven. *Matt. vii.*

Lord, grant that I may not rest in the mere profession of thy truth, or in calling upon thy name, but enable me to evince my faith by my works. Assist me to walk in all holy obedience; grant that I may not shrink from painful or self-denying duties, but make me willing rather to part with the right hand or pluck out the right eye than be excluded from the blessed in-

heritance provided for thy people. O may thine holy Spirit enable me always to know and do thy will.

Zaccheus stood forth, and said unto the Lord, Behold, Lord, the half of my goods I give to the poor, and if I have done any wrong to any man, I restore four-fold. *Luke xix.*

Assist me, O Lord, suitably to meditate upon, and, according to my ability, to imitate the example of thy servant, Zaccheus. Dispose and enable me to make restitution to any whom I have injured; give me a spirit of tender compassion and enlarged liberality to all who are poor and afflicted, and grant that my dependence for acceptance with thee, my God, may be placed solely and entirely on the merits and righteousness of thy Son Jesus Christ our Lord.

Who goeth a warfare at any time of his own cost? Who planteth a vineyard, and eateth not of the fruit thereof? Or, who feedeth a flock, and eateth not of the milk of the flock? *1 Cor. ix.*

Vouchsafe, O Lord, thy special blessing to those who watch for our souls, may they see abundant fruit of their labours, and may all who are converted under their ministrations, be deeply impressed with a sense of thy great mercy, and shew their gratitude to thee by their liberal contributions for the extension of thy kingdom, and the support of those who proclaim thy truth.

If we have sown unto you spiritual things, is it a great matter if we shall reap your worldly things? 1 Cor. ix.

Forgive, O Lord, every instance in which I have murmured at the claims of thy ministering servants, or grudged or withheld those contributions which are necessary for the comfortable support of themselves and their families. What shall it profit me if I gain the whole world and lose mine own soul. O keep far from me that love of money which is the root of all evil, and dispose me to deny myself unnecessary indulgences, that I may assist and relieve the wants of thy faithful servants.

Do ye not know, that they who minister about holy things, live of the sacrifice ; and they who wait at the altar are partakers with the altar ? Even so hath the Lord also ordained, that they who preach the gospel should live of the gospel. 1 Cor. ix.

How small, O Lord, are the returns which we can make, to those who proclaim unto us the glad tidings of salvation. Accept the free-will offerings which from time to time are made for their temporal support and comfort ; bless them abundantly in their own souls, may the work of the Lord prosper in their hands, and may they never be compelled to mourn over the thoughtlessness or ingratitude of any who receive spiritual advantage from their ministrations, but may their people be disposed to imitate the conduct of those ancient believers, who sent once and again to the relief of the apostle's necessity.

He that soweth little shall reap little ; and he that soweth plenteously shall reap plenteously. Let every man do according as he is disposed in his heart,

not grudgingly, or of necessity, for God loveth a cheerful giver. *2 Cor. ix.*

Increase my faith, O merciful Father, and enable me fully and constantly to trust thy word. May the love of Christ constrain me to lay out myself more entirely and unreservedly for the promotion of thy glory, and the welfare of immortal souls ; shed abroad thy grace abundantly in my heart, and cause me ever to abound in love towards thee and towards all men.

Let him that is taught in the word minister unto him that teacheth, in all good things. Be not deceived, God is not mocked ; for whatsoever a man soweth that shall he also reap. *Gal. vi.*

Thou, and thou only knowest, O Lord, how far my heart is truly devoted to thy service. O shew me my true character ; let not a deceived heart turn me aside, that I should ever henceforth sow unto the flesh ; but deliver me, O Lord, from the love of the world, the lust of the flesh ; the lust of the eye, and the pride of life ; may I neither withhold through covetousness, nor give through ostentation, but

always remember that I am no longer mine own, but bought with a price, and engaged to glorify thee, my God, with my body and soul which are thine.

While we have time, let us do good unto all men, and especially unto them that are of the household of faith. *Gal. vi.*

“ So teach me to number my days that I may apply my heart unto wisdom.” May I ever remember how short, how uncertain my time is, and be enabled by thy grace, to improve each remaining opportunity of doing good to others, or deriving benefit to my own soul. Enable me especially to assist, encourage and comfort my fellow-christians. Lord, increase their number exceedingly. Add to thy church daily such as shall be saved; and may all thy people grow in grace, and in the knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ.

Godliness is great riches, if a man be content with that he hath; for we brought nothing into the world, neither may we carry any thing out. *1 Tim. vi.*

Lord, grant unto me those true riches, even durable riches and righteousness. May I receive the portion, which thou, in thy providence appointest for me, with grateful submission; make me satisfied with thy dispensations, but let me not rest in any thing short of true godliness. Put thy fear in my heart; write thy law on my mind and cause me to delight in thee as the Lord my God; and may I ever remember that yet a little while I must part with all things here below, and stand before thy judgment-seat. Lord, grant that I may find mercy in that day.

Charge them who are rich in this world, that they be ready to give, and glad to distribute; laying up in store for themselves a good foundation against the time to come, that they may attain eternal life. 1 *Tim.* vi.

Grant, O Lord, that all on whom thou hast bestowed the good things of this life, may have grace to use them to thy glory, and ever remember the account which they must one day give of their stewardship. Help me to improve diligently my time

and talents, and make me faithful in the little which thou hast entrusted to my charge.

God is not unrighteous, that he will forget your works, and labour that proceedeth of love ; which love ye have shewed for his name's sake, who have ministered unto the saints, and yet do minister.
Heb. vi.

Blessed be thy name, O Lord, for the encouraging declarations of thy word. It is thine own which we offer unto thee, and yet thou assurest us that a cup of cold water given to a disciple in the name of a disciple, shall not lose its reward ; mercifully vouchsafe to pour down upon me the riches of thy grace, and may I abound in the fruits of holiness to the praise and glory of thy name.

To do good, and to distribute, forget not ; for with such sacrifices God is well pleased. *Heb. xiii.*

Lord grant that I may be unwearied in my attempts to do good. May I never rest satisfied with present efforts, so as to

desist from renewed exertions, but as thy mercies are renewed unto me day by day, so may I be daily and continually endeavouring to assist and benefit others.

Whoso hath this world's good, and seeth his brother have need, and shutteth up his compassion from him, how dwelleth the love of God in him? *John iii.*

Preserve me ever, O Lord, by thy grace from this harsh and unfeeling disposition. Thou, O Lord, didst magnify thine exceeding love in giving thine own dear Son to die for the ungodly. O may that mind be in me which was in Christ Jesus. May I in some feeble measure copy his bright example and manifest a tender pity and compassion even to the chief of sinners, intreating them ever to repent and turn to God that they may be saved.

Give alms of thy goods, and never turn thy face from any poor man; and then the face of the Lord shall not be turned away from thee. *Tobit iv.*

Assist me, O Lord, that according to thine holy word, I may ever give to him.

that asketh, and from him that would borrow of me let me not turn away. Give me wisdom to direct, and grace to be faithful; and whether I eat or drink, or whatsoever I do, may I do all to the glory of God.

Be merciful after thy power. If thou hast much, give plenteously; if thou hast little, do thy diligence gladly to give of that little: for so gatherest thou thyself a good reward in the day of necessity. *Tobit iv.*

Lord, when saw we thee an hungered and feed thee? or thirsty and gave thee drink; when saw we thee a stranger and took thee in? or naked and clothed thee? or when saw we thee sick or in prison, and came unto thee? And the king shall answer and say unto them, Verily I say unto you, in as much as ye have done it unto one of the least of these my brethren, ye have done it unto me.

He that hath pity upon the poor lendeth unto the Lord: and look, what he layeth out, it shall be paid him again. *Prov. xix.*

Vouchsafe unto me, O Lord, true wisdom, that I may indeed understand thy word, and stedfast faith implicitly to believe and continually to act according to thy precepts. Accept my scanty offerings, and be merciful unto me according as thou usest to be unto those who love thy name.

Blessed be the man that provideth for the sick and needy; the Lord shall deliver him in the time of trouble. *Psalm xli.*

Prepare me, O Lord, by thy grace, for what thou art appointing for me in thy providence; thou hast said, In the world ye shall have tribulation, but be of good cheer, I have overcome the world. O vouchsafe to be with me in every time of trouble; support and comfort me by the communications of thy grace, and make me indeed more than conqueror through him who hath loved me and given himself for me.

¶ *When the alms are collected and placed upon the Communion table, the whole congregation kneel down and the minister says,*

Let us pray for the whole state of Christ's church militant here in earth.

Almighty and everliving God, who by thy holy apostle hast taught us to make prayers and supplications, and to give thanks for all men; we humbly beseech thee most mercifully [*to accept our alms and oblations, and*] to receive these our prayers, which we offer unto thy divine Majesty, beseeching thee to inspire continually the universal church with the spirit of truth, unity, and concord: and grant, that all they that do confess thy holy name may agree in the truth of thy holy word, and live in unity and godly love. We beseech thee also to save and defend all Christian kings, princes, and governors, and especially thy servant WILLIAM our king; that under him we may be godly and quietly governed: and grant unto his whole council, and to all that are put in

authority under him, that they may truly and indifferently minister justice to the punishment of wickedness and vice, and to the maintenance of thy true religion and virtue. Give grace, O heavenly Father, to all bishops and curates, that they may both by their life and doctrine set forth thy true and lively word, and rightly and duly administer thy holy sacraments: and to all thy people give thy heavenly grace; and especially to this congregation here present; that, with meek heart and due reverence, they may hear and receive thy holy word; truly serving thee in holiness and righteousness all the days of their life. And we most humbly beseech thee of thy goodness, O Lord, to comfort and succour all them, who in this transitory life are in trouble, sorrow, need, sickness, or any other adversity. And we also bless thy holy name for all thy servants departed this life in thy faith and fear; beseeching thee to give us grace so to follow their good examples, that with them we may be partakers of thy heavenly

kingdom ; grant this, O Father, for Jesus Christ's sake, our only Mediator and Advocate. Amen.

The minister then reads the following exhortation ;—see page 24. for explanation of some expressions which are often misunderstood.

¶ *At the time of the celebration of the Communion, the communicants being conveniently placed for the receiving of the holy Sacrament, the priest shall say this exhortation.*

Dearly beloved in the Lord, ye that mind to come to the holy communion of the body and blood of our Saviour Christ, must consider how St. Paul exhorteth all persons diligently to try and examine themselves, before they presume to eat of that bread, and drink of that cup. For as the benefit is great, if with a true penitent heart and lively faith we receive that holy sacrament ; (for then we spiritually eat the flesh of Christ, and drink his blood ; then we dwell in Christ, and Christ in us ; we are one with Christ, and Christ with us ;) so is the danger great, if we receive the

same unworthily. For then we are guilty of the body and blood of Christ our Saviour ; we eat and drink our own damnation, not considering the Lord's body ; we kindle God's wrath against us : we provoke him to plague us with divers diseases, and sundry kinds of death. Judge therefore yourselves, brethren, that ye be not judged of the Lord ; repent ye truly for your sins past ; have a lively and steadfast faith in Christ our Saviour ; amend your lives, and be in perfect charity with all men ; so shall ye be meet partakers of those holy mysteries. And above all things ye must give most humble and hearty thanks to God the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost, for the redemption of the world by the death and passion of our Saviour Christ, both God and man ; who did humble himself, even to the death upon the cross, for us, miserable sinners, who lay in darkness and the shadow of death ; that he might make us the children of God, and exalt us to everlasting life. And to the end that we should alway remember the

exceeding great love of our Master, and only Saviour, Jesus Christ, thus dying for us, and the innumerable benefits which by his precious blood-shedding he hath obtained to us; he hath instituted and ordained holy mysteries, as pledges of his love, and for a continual remembrance of his death, to our great and endless comfort. To him, therefore, with the Father, and the Holy Ghost, let us give (as we are most bounden) continual thanks; submitting ourselves wholly to his holy will and pleasure, and studying to serve him in true holiness and righteousness all the days of our life. Amen.

¶ *Then shall the priest say to them that come to receive the holy Communion.*

Ye that do truly and earnestly repent you of your sins, and are in love and charity with your neighbours, and intend to lead a new life, following the commandments of God, and walking from henceforth in his holy ways; draw near with faith, and take this holy sacrament to your comfort; and make your

humble confession to Almighty God,
meekly kneeling upon your knees.

In some churches, when this invitation is read, the communicants proceed from their own seats to the chancel, and where the number of communicants is small they sometimes kneel at the communion rails, but in general they remain in their own pews, and kneeling down, repeat the following confession, with a loud voice, after the minister.

¶ *Then shall this general confession be made, in the name of all those that are minded to receive the holy Communion, by one of the ministers; both he and all the people kneeling humbly upon their knees, and saying,*

Almighty God, Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, Maker of all things, Judge of all men; we acknowledge and bewail our manifold sins and wickedness, which we, from time to time, most grievously have committed, by thought, word, and deed, against thy divine majesty, provoking most justly thy wrath and in-

dignation against us. We do earnestly repent, and are heartily sorry for these our misdoings; the remembrance of them is grievous unto us; the burden of them is intolerable. Have mercy upon us, have mercy upon us, most merciful Father; for thy Son, our Lord, Jesus Christ's sake, forgive us all that is past; and grant that we may ever hereafter serve and please thee in newness of life, to the honour and glory of thy name, through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

¶ *Then follows the Absolution, repeated by the priest alone.*

Almighty God, our heavenly Father, who of his great mercy hath promised forgiveness of sins to all them that with hearty repentance and true faith turn unto him; have mercy upon you; pardon and deliver you from all your sins; confirm and strengthen you in all goodness, and bring you to everlasting life, through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

So be it unto me, O Lord ; pardon, accept, save, and bless me, for thy dear Son's sake.

¶ *Then shall the priest say,*

Hear what comfortable words our Saviour Christ saith unto all that truly turn to him :

Come unto me all that travail and are heavy laden, and I will refresh you. *Matt. xi. 28.*

Lord, I labour and am heavy laden with the burden of my sins. O refresh my soul with thy pardon, grace, and mercy.

So God loved the world, that he gave his only-begotten Son, to the end that all that believe in him, should not perish, but have everlasting life. *John iii. 16.*

Thanks be unto God for his unspeakable gift. O give unto me, for Christ's sake, that living faith, that I may never perish, but have everlasting life.

Hear also what St. Paul saith. This is a true saying, and worthy of all men to be received, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners. 1 *Tim.* i. 15.

Blessed be thy name, O Lord, for this most gracious declaration. O vouchsafe to save me a poor, lost, perishing sinner, who now come humbly and earnestly desiring an interest in the all-atoning sacrifice of thy dear Son.

Hear also what St. John saith. If any man sin, we have an advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous; and he is the propitiation for our sins. 1 *John* ii. 1.

O Lord, my sins are more than I can express; look upon me through this all-prevailing advocate and propitiation, and deal with me according to the abundant grace revealed to perishing sinners in him.

¶ *After which the priest shall proceed, saying,*
Lift up your hearts.

Answer. We lift them up unto the Lord.

Priest. Let us give thanks unto our Lord God.

Answer. It is meet and right so to do.

¶ *Then shall the priest turn to the Lord's table, and say,*

It is very meet, right, and our bounden duty, that we should at all times, and in all places, give thanks unto thee, O Lord, Holy Father, Almighty, Everlasting God.

¶ *Here shall follow the proper Prefaces, according to the time, if there be any specially appointed; or else immediately shall follow,*

Therefore with angels and archangels, and with all the company of heaven, we laud and magnify thy glorious name; evermore praising thee, and saying, Holy, holy, holy, Lord God of hosts, heaven and earth are full of thy glory: glory be to thee, O Lord most high. Amen.

PROPER PREFACES.

Upon CHRISTMAS-DAY, and seven days after.

Because thou didst give Jesus Christ thine only Son to be born as at this time for us; who, by the operation of the Holy Ghost, was made very man of the substance of the Virgin Mary his mother; and that without spot of sin, to make us clean from all sin. Therefore with angels, &c.

Upon EASTER-DAY, and seven days after.

But chiefly are we bound to praise thee for the glorious resurrection of thy Son Jesus Christ our Lord: for he is the very Paschal Lamb, which was offered for us, and hath taken away the sin of the world; who by his death hath destroyed death, and by his rising to life again hath restored to us everlasting life. Therefore with angels, &c.

Upon ASCENSION-DAY, and seven days after.

Through thy most dearly beloved Son

Jesus Christ our Lord, who after his most glorious resurrection, manifestly appeared to all his apostles, and in their sight ascended up into heaven to prepare a place for us, that where he is, thither we might also ascend, and reign with him in glory. Therefore with angels, &c.

Upon WHIT-SUNDAY, and six days after.

Through Jesus Christ our Lord, according to whose most true promise, the Holy Ghost came down as at this time from heaven with a sudden great sound, as it had been a mighty wind, in the likeness of fiery tongues, lighting upon the apostles, to teach them, and to lead them to all truth ; giving them both the gift of divers languages, and also boldness with fervent zeal constantly to preach the Gospel unto all nations ; whereby we have been brought out of darkness and error, into the clear light and true knowledge of thee, and of thy Son Jesus Christ. Therefore with angels, &c.

Upon the Feast of TRINITY only.

Who art one God, one Lord, not one only person, but three persons in one substance. For that which we believe of the glory of the Father, the same we believe of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost, without any difference or inequality. Therefore with angels, &c.

¶ *After each of which Prefaces shall immediately be sung or said,*

Therefore with angels and archangels, and with all the company of heaven, we laud and magnify thy glorious name, evermore praising thee, and saying, Holy, holy, holy, Lord God of hosts, heaven and earth are full of thy glory; glory be to thee, O Lord most high. Amen.

¶ *Then shall the priest, kneeling down at the Lord's table, say in the name of all them that shall receive the Communion this prayer following.*

We do not presume to come to this thy table, O merciful Lord, trusting in our own righteousness, but in thy manifold and great mercies. We are not worthy so much as to gather up the crumbs under

thy table. But thou art the same Lord, whose property is always to have mercy : grant us, therefore, gracious Lord, so to eat the flesh of thy dear Son Jesus Christ, and to drink his blood, that our sinful bodies may be made clean by his body, and our souls washed through his most precious blood, and that we may evermore dwell in him, and he in us. Amen.

¶ *When the priest, standing before the table, hath so ordered the bread and wine, that he may with the more readiness and decency break the bread before the people, and take the cup into his hands, he shall say the Prayer of Consecration, as followeth,*

Almighty God, our heavenly Father, who of thy tender mercy didst give thine only Son Jesus Christ to suffer death upon the cross for our redemption ; who made there (by his one oblation of himself once offered) a full, perfect, and sufficient sacrifice, oblation, and satisfaction, for the sins of the whole world ; and did institute, and in his holy gospel command us to continue, a perpetual memory of that his precious death, until

his coming again; hear us, O merciful Father, we most humbly beseech thee; and grant that we receiving these thy creatures of bread and wine, according to thy Son, our Saviour, Jesus Christ's holy institution, in remembrance of his death and passion, may be partakers of his most blessed body and blood; who, in the same night that he was betrayed, took bread; and, when he had given thanks, he brake it, and gave it to his disciples, saying, Take, eat, this is my body which is given for you: do this in remembrance of me. Likewise after supper he took the cup; and when he had given thanks, he gave it to them, saying, Drink ye all of this; for this is my blood of the New Testament, which is shed for you and for many for the remission of sins: do this, as oft as ye shall drink it, in remembrance of me. Amen.

When this prayer is ended, there is usually a short interval while the officiating minister receives the Lord Supper himself, and delivers it to those clergymen

who assist in the administration. Endeavour therefore at this period to compose your thoughts, and offer up a few short petitions to your heavenly Father; and then proceed quietly and humbly to the Lord's table. It is of small consequence in itself whether you go sooner or later, but generally speaking, it is more convenient for persons who sit in the same pew, to move at the same time. In some churches, where the communicants are numerous, and the space near the altar small, it is convenient to go up to the altar on one side of the aisle, and return on the other; it is desirable that the communion rails should be well and regularly filled; every individual should observe the utmost quietness and composure, and especially guard against, in any way, interrupting others.

When first you communicate in any place, you may not exactly fall into the regular plan; but do not disturb or perplex yourself about any little awkwardness or mistake: your heavenly Father delighteth in mercy. Your minister and fellow-communicants will gladly welcome

your approach, and will feel tenderly for, and sympathize with you, and perhaps lift up their hearts in prayer on your behalf, and in grateful praise that another young Christian has come forward to confess their Lord and Master.

In some cases, when the minister delivers the bread or wine, he repeats the whole sentence to each individual ; in others, he repeats the sentence only once to all who surround the table at the same time ; in others, he repeats it while distributing the elements to four, six, or more persons ; the last mode is found the most expeditious, which is of considerable importance, when the communicants are numerous, but in other respects it is of no consequence which plan is adopted, in either case, remember the whole blessing belongs particularly to you, and to each of your fellow-communicants.

PRAYER.

O Lord, I come in obedience to thy command : I desire now to receive the

tokens of thy dying love. Help me to feed by faith on Thee, the living head. May thy body, broken for sin, deliver me from all the guilt, and condemnation, and suffering which my transgressions have deserved. May thy blood cleanse me from all sin; may it speak peace to my conscience. May my reception of the bread and wine be accompanied with a lively hope and expectation of pardon, peace, and all spiritual and eternal blessings through Christ. O may I be strengthened and refreshed, and enabled to love thee more, and serve thee better, until at length I am admitted to thy blissful presence in glory everlasting, and there may I be indeed for ever with the Lord. Amen.

¶ *Then shall the Minister first receive the Communion in both kinds himself, and then proceed to deliver the same to the Bishops, Priests, and Deacons, in like manner, if any be present, and after that to the people also in order, into their hands, all meekly kneeling. And, when he delivereth the Bread to any one, he shall say,*

**The Body of Our Lord Jesus Christ,
which was given for thee, preserve thy**

body and soul unto everlasting life. Take and eat this in remembrance that Christ died for thee, and feed on him in thy heart by faith with thanksgiving.

On receiving the Bread.

Blessed Jesus preserve my body and soul to everlasting life. I take and eat this in remembrance of thy death upon the cross for my sins. Blessed be thy name that thou hast died for one so weak, so worthless, so guilty as I am. O strengthen me by thy grace, and keep me to everlasting life.

¶ *And the Minister that delivereth the Cup to any one shall say,*

The Blood of our Lord Jesus Christ, which was shed for thee, preserve thy body and soul unto everlasting life. Drink this in remembrance that Christ's Blood was shed for thee, and be thankful.

May thy blood, O merciful Redeemer, purge away my sins : wash me and I shall be clean. Take away iniquity, re-

ceive me graciously, make me wholly thine. May I love, and serve, and please thee daily more and more ; and at length may I be admitted to thine heavenly kingdom to praise thee for ever. Thou art worthy to receive glory, and honour, and power, for thou wast slain and hast redeemed us to God by thy blood.

After you have communicated, return gently and quietly to your own place, and kneeling down, pour forth your soul in secret prayer and praise to Almighty God.

PRAAYER.

O Lord, my God, who hast given thine own dear Son, Jesus Christ, to die for our sins, and rise again for our justification ; and hast graciously vouchsafed to permit me now to receive the pledges and tokens of his dying love, mercifully grant that I may indeed partake of the abundance of his grace. Pardon and blot out all my sins ; let them never more appear against

me in judgment to condemn me. Implant in me all pure and holy affections; subdue in me every evil passion and every sinful temper: create in me a clean heart, O God, and renew a right spirit within me; may I be henceforth meek and lowly in heart; mild and gentle in my conversation; patient and forgiving under provocation; and abounding in all the fruits of the Spirit, even love, joy, peace, long-suffering and tender compassion towards all men; and thus, Lord, vouchsafe to renew and confirm in me all lowly affections; enable me to advance continually in the divine life, and to be more and more conformed to the image of thy dear Son.

And mercifully vouchsafe, O Lord, to bless all my fellow-worshippers; may we, who are now together partaking of one bread and one cup, be all so partakers of the body and blood of Christ, that we may together be saved in him. O let none of us be wanting in that day, but may we all wash our robes and make them white in the blood of the Lamb. May we all be together admitted before thy throne; be clothed in the garments of righteous-

ness, and unite in triumphant songs of praise unto him who hath loved us and given himself for us.

O grant that whilst here on earth we may ever walk as the followers of the Lamb. Strengthen each of us by thy grace—keep us from falling—enable us to resist the temptations of this evil world—to obtain the victory over all our spiritual enemies, and to be more than conquerors through him who hath loved us.

Lord, bless all my dear relations and friends [my parents, my brethren and sisters, my young companions] and all who are near and dear unto me: may they all partake of thy saving grace, and grow in faith and in the knowledge of thee—may we live together in love and peace, and daily prepare for that solemn season when we must part to meet no more on earth; but O grant that we may all meet together, with joy unspeakable, at thy right hand in heaven.

Lord, accept the dedication which I here make of myself unto Thee. I would be wholly and entirely thine. Enable me to live to him who hath died for me. O

pour down upon me the abundant influences of thy Holy Spirit; be with me in the closing parts of this service; be with me when I return to my own habitation. If thy spirit go not with me, let me not go up hence. Be with me if again permitted this day to worship in thy courts: assist thy ministering servant in preaching thine holy word: and may my prayers and praises rise up with acceptance before thy mercy-seat, and my soul profit exceedingly by the word preached. Be with me, O Lord, in family and secret worship, and go forth with me day by day to all the labours, duties, and services to which I am called—may I do all to thy praise and glory; experience more and more of thy presence continually; and at length in thine own good time, and best appointed way, take me to thyself; that I may be for ever with the Lord, to see his face and sing his praise for ever. Lord grant these unspeakable blessings in all their rich abundance, for the sake and merits, and through the all-prevailing intercession of my Lord and Saviour, Jesus Christ. Amen.

Where the number of communicants is small, the time you can give to private devotion will be but short,—be not, therefore, anxious to run through a long prayer ; but confine yourself to a few short petitions which appear more especially suitable to your case ; and be ready to join with your minister and fellow-worshippers in the public service. On the contrary, where the number of communicants is large, you may have more time than you can conveniently employ in private devotion. In this case, you will rise from your knees, and resuming your seat, endeavour to compose your thoughts and occupy your mind with some suitable subject of meditation ; such as the Redeemer's love to perishing sinners ; the plenteous redemption provided in Christ Jesus ; the gracious assistance provided by the Holy Spirit ; the blessedness of a holy life ; the certainty of a joyful resurrection ; the inconceivable happiness, and never-ending enjoyments of heaven. Or you may meditate on the sermon you have just heard, or on some appropriate passage of scripture ; such as Gen.

xxii. Isa. liii. Psalm xxiii. John x. xiv. Heb. x. Rev. vii. or any of those mentioned before, page 83: or you may turn to some suitable Psalms or Hymns, of which you will find several referred to in the lists of subjects annexed to most of those selections which are used in our churches. In this way your time will be suitably and beneficially employed. Be not anxious, however, to occupy every moment, and guard, lest by repeated change of book, or posture, or any other trifling inattention, you should disturb or interrupt the devotion and meditation of your fellow-communicants.

In some churches, when the communicants have all received, a hymn is sung; while in others, the congregation kneel down, and the minister commences the following service, which is called the POST COMMUNION—that is, the *after Communion*.

¶ *Then shall the Priest say the Lord's Prayer, the people repeating after him every Petition.*

Our Father, which art in heaven, hallowed be thy name. Thy kingdom come.

Thy will be done in earth, As it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread. And forgive us our trespasses, As we forgive them that trespass against us. And lead us not into temptation; But deliver us from evil; For thine is the kingdom, The power and the glory, For ever and ever. Amen.

¶ After shall be said as followeth,

O Lord and heavenly Father, we, thy humble servants, entirely desire thy fatherly goodness, mercifully to accept this our sacrifice of praise and thanksgiving; most humbly beseeching thee to grant, that by the merits and death of thy Son, Jesus Christ, and through faith in his blood, we and all thy whole Church may obtain remission of our sins, and all other benefits of his passion. And here we offer and present unto thee, O Lord, ourselves, our souls and bodies, to be a reasonable, holy, and lively sacrifice unto thee; humbly beseeching thee, that all we, who are partakers of this holy Communion, may be fulfilled with thy grace and heavenly

benediction. And although we be unworthy, through our manifold sins, to offer unto thee any sacrifice, yet we beseech thee to accept this our bounden duty and service; not weighing our merits, but pardoning our offences, through Jesus Christ our Lord; by whom, and with whom, in the unity of the Holy Ghost, all honour and glory be unto thee, O Father Almighty, world without end. *Amen.*

Or this,

Almighty and everliving God, we most heartily thank thee, for that thou dost vouchsafe to feed us, who have duly received these holy mysteries, with the spiritual food of the most precious Body and Blood of thy Son our Saviour Jesus Christ; and dost assure us thereby of thy favour and goodness towards us; and that we are very members incorporate in the mystical body of thy Son, which is the blessed company of all faithful people; and are also heirs through hope of thy everlasting kingdom, by the merits of the most precious

death and passion of thy dear Son. And we most humbly beseech thee, O heavenly Father, so to assist us with thy grace, that we may continue in that holy fellowship, and do all such good works as thou hast prepared for us to walk in; through Jesus Christ our Lord, to whom, with thee and the Holy Ghost, be all honour and glory, world without end. *Amen.*

The following song of praise is either chanted or repeated by the people after the Minister.

¶ *Then shall be said or sung,*

Glory be to God on high, and in earth peace, good-will towards men. We praise thee, we bless thee, we worship thee, we glorify thee, we give thanks to thee for thy great glory, O Lord God, heavenly King, God the Father Almighty.

O Lord, the only-begotten Son Jesu Christ; O Lord God, Lamb of God, Son of the Father, that takest away the sins of the world, have mercy upon us. Thou that takest away the sins of the

world, have mercy upon us. Thou that takest away the sins of the world, receive our prayer. Thou that sittest at the right hand of God, the Father, have mercy upon us.

For thou only art holy; thou only art the Lord; thou only, O Christ, with the Holy Ghost, art most high in the glory of God the Father. Amen.

¶ *Then the Priest, or Bishop, if he be present, shall let them depart with this Blessing.*

The peace of God, which passeth all understanding, keep your hearts and minds in the knowledge and love of God, and of his Son Jesus Christ our Lord: and the blessing of God Almighty, the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost, be amongst you and remain with you always. Amen.

Lord, accept the service I have now attempted to offer to thy divine Majesty; pour down upon me the riches of thy grace; may I ever be mindful of the vows of God which are upon me; and may thy body broken and thy blood poured out,

strengthen and refresh my soul, and keep me to everlasting life, that there I may praise thee for ever. Hear, O Lord and answer, and accept and bless for the sake of Jesus Christ my Lord: to whom, with thee, O Father, and thee, O Holy Ghost, be all honour and glory, world without end. Amen.

On returning to your own habitation, if you have opportunity, retire for a few moments to your chamber or closet, and pour forth your soul in secret for a continuance of the divine blessing, and then join the family with a cheerful, composed, and thankful heart to that God who hath done so great things for you.

PRAYER.

O most gracious and merciful Father, accept my thanks and praise for the privilege with which I have now been favoured of drawing near unto Thee, at the table of thy dear Son, and partaking of the to-

kens of his dying love. Lord, I am not worthy of this thine unspeakable gift. Thou mightest justly have left me under that condemnation which my sins have deserved. Blessed, therefore, and praised be thy name, O Lord, for thine inestimable love in the redemption of the world by thy dear Son, our Lord Jesus Christ. Blessed be thy name that thou hast, as I humbly trust, disposed my heart to seek for mercy through him. Blessed be thy name for bringing me into covenant with thyself, and affording those lively tokens and pledges of thy love which I have now received. O continue thy loving-kindness unto me. Keep me by thy mighty power through faith unto salvation. Enable me to overcome the temptations of the world, the flesh, and the devil; and strengthen me by the gracious influences of the Holy Spirit, that I may adorn the doctrine of God my Saviour in all things, until at length I am admitted to praise thy holy name in glory everlasting. Hear, O my God, and answer, and have mercy upon me, for the alone sake and merits of Jesus Christ, my Lord and Saviour. Amen.

And now, my dear young friends, having accompanied you in your preparation for, your approach to, and your return from the Lord's Table, I feel still reluctant to part without adding a few more observations by way of improvement. It not unfrequently happens, that where the true Christian has been favoured with especial communion with God in his ordinances, and when he is ready to say, "It is good to be here,"—"my mountain standeth so strong that I shall never be moved," that the great enemy of souls assails him with some sudden and overpowering temptation; which even if it prevail not to seduce him into sin, yet for a season very materially interferes with the joy and peace which he had experienced or anticipated. Be not therefore surprised, if after drawing near to the Table of the Lord, and experiencing some delightful communion with your heavenly Father, you find your consolations interrupted, and your transient joy followed by anxiety and heaviness; but remember that he whom you serve, is the

Lord who changeth not, "the same yesterday, to day, and for ever," who knows your weakness, your infirmities, your temptations, who will not break the bruised reed, or quench the smoking flax, but will in due time return in mercy and speak again peace unto your soul.

Nor be surprised should you meet with trials from quarters where you might least expect them. It sometimes happens, that when young persons are through God's mercy, brought to a deep sense of the importance of religion, and led to comply with the command of their Lord and Saviour, and devote themselves unto him at his table, that their parents, elder brothers and sisters, or other relatives, are secretly displeased at the conduct which they cannot deny to be right, and which for various reasons they may not venture to censure. Sometimes for instance, one member of a family staying half-an-hour or an hour later at Church than the rest, interferes in some slight degree with the usual meal ; and the young Christian returning home with lively affections, is met with some taunting or unkind express-

sion which could not be foreseen or prepared for, and while attempting to reply to such observations, may perhaps advert to the plain command of the Saviour ; to the value and worth of the soul, or to some other unquestionable truths, which may yet, either as to the matter or manner, afford a pretext to the objector, to charge the communicant with spiritual pride, self-preference, or some other improper motive and disposition. Now should you meet with any thing of this nature, endeavour, in patience to possess your souls : be not eager to reply to the unkind remark, or to defend yourself against the unjust insinuation—but lift up your heart to your heavenly Father, saying secretly, “Thou shalt, answer for me, O Lord my God.” Be silent, even though things are laid to your charge which your soul detests, lest by giving way to a hasty temper, you should afford any just cause of censure ; yet, while silent, beware of being sullen or resentful ; endeavour to cultivate and shew the kindest feelings, and readiest attention to all, and especially to those whose conduct is most painful to you. Think

how that Saviour to whom you have just been devoting yourself, endured the contradiction of sinners against himself, and pray for grace that you may copy the example of his meekness, patience, and long-suffering. The more you are enabled thus to rule and subdue your spirit, the more assuredly will you find peace in your own souls, and the more certainly will you in due time terminate the opposition to which you are exposed, dispose the minds of those who now object to regard your conduct in a more favourable light, and perhaps at length induce one and another to say, "We will go with you, for God is with you of a truth."

Should the treatment you meet with be still more disagreeable and painful than I have here intimated, yet remember, "that it is better, if the will of God be so, that you suffer for well-doing than for evil-doing." (1 Peter iii. 14—18.) Your attendance at the Lord's Table is a duty enjoined by Christ himself; and if your attention to that duty is followed by reproach, or contempt, or harsh and unkind treatment from any, you are really suffer-

ing for well doing; and so long as you do not provoke such sufferings by any improper temper or conduct, your trials shall turn to you for a testimony; and shall eventually work together for your good. (See Romans viii. 28; Heb. xii. 3—11.) By meekness, gentleness, and forbearance; and by patient continuance in well-doing, you will assuredly find that your trials will gradually diminish; while! by giving way to hasty tempers, and harsh language, you will at once bring guilt on your conscience, and provoke renewed and increasing opposition.

But from such trials, I trust many of you, my young friends, are exempted. Your parents and other relatives might not perhaps be favoured in their early days with the opportunities and advantages which you enjoy; and when persons are entangled in much worldly business, and with the cares and anxieties of a numerous family; and especially when the husband and the wife are not both seriously impressed with the value of the soul, and the importance of following the Lord fully, they often find difficulties in

their way, of which you have little conception, and through these difficulties, I have reason to believe that some seriously disposed persons in our parish have hitherto been detained from the Lord's Table ; yet though such persons may not countenance you by their own example, I trust they are prepared to give you every reasonable support and encouragement ; to afford you for instance, as much leisure for retirement, and as frequent opportunities for attending public worship, as the circumstances of their situation will allow ; if such be your privilege, be thankful to your heavenly Father for his great mercy, and endeavour to improve the advantages with which you are favoured to your growth in grace, and the knowledge and experience of true religion.

In order to this, I would say, be regular and diligent in private prayer, family prayer, and public worship. You may perhaps live in a house where the family are not daily called upon to unite in the worship of God ; this is a serious evil ; and one which I hope will never exist in any house which you may hereafter

call your own ; and should you on any account leave home ; and go to service, or any other situation, endeavour my young friends, to ascertain whether the worship of God is set up in the house to which you are invited ; and prefer a situation in such a family to one which may offer you greater advantages in a worldly point of view. But though you may not have it at present in your power to attend on family worship, you may still frequently attend at the house of God, and regularly enjoy the privilege of communing with him in secret prayer. Endeavour then statedly to redeem time for this important duty. Our Lord and Master rose a great while before day, that he might pour out his soul in prayer to God ; you are not called to rise so early, but it may be necessary for you to rise somewhat earlier than you like, that you may worship God in secret, before you enter upon those duties in the family, which your parents or masters may require. A few moments thus employed in acknowledging God's goodness, and seeking his direction and blessing, will very much

conduce to your present comfort and future progress in true religion. By thus daily gaining a little time, you will not only secure an opportunity for communion with God, but obviate an objection which has very often been, without any sufficient ground, brought against religious professors in the words of one of old, saying, "Ye are idle, ye are idle, and therefore ye say, Let us go and do sacrifice to the Lord." Secure also an opportunity in the evening, for private prayer. It is not very often that persons are hard pressed for time at both ends of the day; if you have more time in the morning, than in the evening, or the contrary, endeavour to regulate your private devotions accordingly, remembering always that it is not the length of your prayers, but their devotion and sincerity which is of especial consequence.

Read daily some portion of God's word, and seek earnestly for the assistance of the Holy Spirit, that you may understand and profit by its sacred declarations; endeavour to think of what you have read while engaged in your worldly business. Remember that you are to

serve and honour God by diligence and faithfulness in your worldly calling. In attending cattle, or following the plough, or standing behind the counter, or minding household concerns, taking care of the children, working with your needle, or whatever you may be called to, you are indeed serving God, so long as you perform those duties as in his sight, and in obedience to his will, who has appointed you your own proper station in life ;—whereas if you neglect, or slight, or do the work your parents or masters require you to do in a careless, or improper manner, you sin against their authority, and you sin also against that God who has appointed you your place and station. Even the slaves of old are commanded by the Apostle to be “ with good will doing service, as unto the Lord and not unto men.”

Attend regularly at the house of God—be there early—before the service begins, and join in every part, in the prayers, the praises, and the portions of scripture which are read, as well as in hearing the sermons preached ; endeavour to remem-

ber what you hear, converse of it with others, if you have opportunity ; examine the texts of scripture to which the preacher refers, turn the instruction into prayers, and endeavour to regulate your lives according to the precepts and promises which are brought before you.

Renew your vows from time to time at the Lord's table. Attend as often at this sacrament, as opportunity is afforded, and other circumstances will allow, and endeavour, by careful and repeated perusal of these pages, and by frequent and diligent preparation, to become habitually and practically ready to draw near to your Lord and Master in these his earthly ordinances, and thus continually to attain to an increasing meetness for the inheritance of the saints in light ; that should you, even in early life, be called by some sudden illness, some violent fever, or some alarming accident, to depart hence, " an abundant entrance may be administered unto you into the everlasting kingdom of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ ; " and that thus you may be for ever with the Lord.

I pray, my dear young friends, that your health and strength may be continued, that your lives may be spared, that you may glorify God, and be instruments of good to others, when my head is laid in that dust to which it must shortly return; but I pray especially that you, your parents, relations, friends, and neighbours, may meet with me at the right hand of our exalted Redeemer, and join in that new song, "Unto him that hath loved us, and washed us from our sins in his own blood, to him be glory and honour for ever and ever. Amen."

PRAYER.

Most gracious and merciful Lord God, our heavenly Father, who hast of thy great goodness brought me to the close of another day; accept my thanks and praise for the mercies and privileges with which I have 'this day been favoured. Blessed be thy name, O Lord, that I have been permitted to worship thee this day in thine house; to join in praising

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thine holy name; to hear thy word read and preached; and to draw near unto thee at thy table, and receive the tokens of my Redeemer's dying love.

Pardon, O Lord, for his sake, the sins, and accept the services of the day which is past. Forgive every vain and wandering thought, every sinful or idle word, every hasty and unsanctified temper. Let not the sins, even of my holiest services, rise up in judgment against me, but blot out all my offences, through the atoning blood, and assist me by thy grace that I may evermore walk in newness of life.

Lord help me to remember the vows of God which are upon me. I have this day, at thy table, and in the especial assembly of thy people, offered and presented unto thee, O Lord, myself, my soul, and body, to be a reasonable, holy, and 'lively sacrifice unto thee: O grant that I may evermore live a life of devotion to thy service, and of zeal for thy glory. Pour down upon me the abundance of thy grace and heavenly benediction, and may I and all my fellow worshippers partake of the inestimable

benefits, blessings and privileges of thy people. May we henceforth live to thy glory and both with our lips and lives shew forth thy praise.

Look, O Lord, especially upon me, and enable me, by thy grace, to glorify thee in that state of life to which I am called. Forgive all my past neglects of communing with thee in secret prayer, and help me to obtain the victory over sloth, and indolence, and every other indulgence, that I may henceforth daily seek with more earnestness for the communications of thy grace. May I be indeed the follower of a meek and lowly Saviour; if reproached or censured by others, help me to subdue my tongue, and temper, and obtain the victory over every angry, passionate, or revengeful disposition: yea, mortify and subdue in me every sinful desire, and implant in me all holy tempers and heavenly affections. O look in tender pity and compassion on those who are living in ignorance and sin: teach them by the influence of thine Holy Spirit to understand and profit by thy word, pour out upon them the abundance of thy grace,

and convert them unto thyself, that they may ever hereafter live to thy glory, and shew forth thy praise. To this end vouchsafe thy blessing to the labours of all thy faithful ministers; wherever thy truth has this day been preached, crown it, with great success; may many be indeed turned from darkness to light, and from the power of Satan unto God; and hasten that time, O Lord, when thy blessed gospel shall be preached to all nations, when the heathen shall be given to thy Son for his inheritance, and the utmost parts of the earth for his possession. Have mercy upon all Jews, Turks, infidels, and heretics; and take from them all ignorance, hardness of heart, and contempt of thy word, and so fetch them home, blessed Lord, to thy flock, that they may be saved among the remnant of the true Israelites.

Bless, O Lord, in an especial manner, thy ministering servant, under whom I am placed. Give him thy presence in his own soul, and may he see much fruit of his labours. Assist him, O Lord, plainly and fully to declare thy mind and

will, and to keep back nothing which is profitable; and O grant that thy word may indeed run and be glorified among us. Bless that word, O Lord, to mine own soul; may I increase in knowledge, in faith, in love, and in all holy obedience. Grant unto me the strengthening and consoling influences of the Holy Spirit, and enable me to go on my way rejoicing in hope of the glory of God. And bless, O Lord, my parents, relations, and companions; yea, may all our friends and neighbours partake of thy saving grace. Look in tender mercy upon any who are neglecting thine ordinances, profaning thy sabbaths, and in any way provoking thy righteous displeasure: Lord, convert their hearts, and turn them from the error of their ways.

Vouchsafe unto me, O Lord, thy gracious protection this night; watch over and defend me from evil and danger; refresh my frail body with rest and sleep; raise me in the morning fitted to serve and please thee. Be with me on the morrow; direct and prosper me in all my undertakings; may I be not slothful in business,

but fervent in spirit, serving thee, my Lord; may I daily and habitually act as in thy sight, be enabled to resist every temptation; be preserved by thy mighty power from every evil, and finally, by thy mercy attain unto everlasting life, for Jesus Christ's sake, to whom with thee, O Father, and thee, O Holy Ghost, be all honour and glory, world without end. Amen.

The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, and the love of God, and the fellowship with the Holy Ghost, be with me now and for evermore. Amen

Occasional Prayers.

MORNING.

Almighty God, who hast graciously preserved me through another night, accept my thanks and praise for thy renewed loving kindness. Thou hast watched over me while I slept, and I am now here before thee this morning the living monument of thy mercy. Grant unto me this day thy presence and blessing; assist me in the duties and services to which I am now called. Be with me in going out and coming in, and protect and preserve me in all my ways; keep me from every sinful thought, word, and work; and enable me in all things to shew forth thy praise. Bless me and those who are near and dear to me, (my parents, brothers, and sisters, fellow-servants, and companions,)

and all with whom I am in any way connected and acquainted; may we live together in love and peace and walk according to the rule of thy holy word, and at length be admitted, through the merits of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, to thy heavenly kingdom.

Bless this our land: give grace and wisdom to our king and all who bear rule and office in his name; may they promote thy glory, and the welfare of these realms. Send peace on earth, O Lord, I beseech thee, and may the dominion of Jesus Christ, the Prince of Peace, spread far and wide. Look upon all who are sick and afflicted, and sanctify their trials; relieve the wants of the distressed, and comfort those who mourn.

Mercifully vouchsafe to pardon all my sins through the Redeemer's precious bloodshedding. Give me strength to withstand every temptation, and especially to resist those sins by which I have in times past been overcome. Pour down upon me the riches of thy grace, and do more and better for me than I can ask or think, for Jesus Christ's sake, in whose

name and words I further call upon thee, saying :

Our Father, &c.

MORNING.

Blessed be thy name, O Lord, for the comfortable and refreshing sleep of the night which is past, and the health and strength with which I am this morning favoured. Help me to improve the life which thou hast continued and the light thou hast renewed to thy glory. Mercifully forgive all my sins for Jesus Christ's sake. Give unto me thine Holy Spirit, and enable me to serve and please thee this day. Preserve me from all dangers and accidents. Provide all things needful for me. Strengthen me for the work and service to which I am called. Keep me from yielding to temptation, from following any evil example, or giving countenance or encouragement to what is wrong. Grant that with quietness I may learn and labour to get my own living; may I be honest, sober, and industrious, and ever

copy the meek and lowly example of my Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. For his sake, O Lord, accept my feeble prayers, and imperfect services, and bless me and all who are near and dear to me, with all spiritual and eternal blessings in him : to whom, with thee, O Father, and thee, O Holy Ghost, be all honour and glory, world without end. *Our Father, &c.*

The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, &c.

EVENING.

Accept, O Lord, my thanks and praise for protection and preservation during the day that is past. Thou hast graciously supplied my bodily wants, provided food convenient for me, and not given me over into the hands of my spiritual enemies. Forgive, O Lord, for Jesus Christ's sake, whatever thy pure and holy eyes have seen amiss in me this day. Pardon every sinful thought, every idle word, hasty temper, or improper action. Forgive, O Lord, every instance wherein I have forgotten thee, or neglected thy command-

ments. Let not my past iniquities rise up in judgment against me, but pardon all my transgressions through the blood of thy dear Son, and blot them out of the book of thy remembrance.

Bless me, O Lord, and all my relations, friends, companions. Grant unto us that measure of worldly success and prosperity, which shall be for thy glory and our good. (May the precious seed which is cast into the earth take root and bring forth abundantly.) (Send seasonable weather for the ripening and gathering in of the fruits of the earth, that we may have bread to eat, and praise thy holy name.) Feed our souls with the bread of life, and may that gospel which is preached among us, sink deep into our hearts and bring forth fruit in our lives to the glory of thy name, and the salvation of our souls.

Be with me, O Lord, this night ; take me into thy care and keeping, watch over and defend me, refresh me with rest and sleep ; suffer no evil to come nigh our dwelling, but may we rise in the morning fitted for the duties of the returning day ; may all my days be spent in thy faith and

fear ; and finally bring me and all who are near and dear to me, to thine heavenly kingdom, for Jesus Christ's sake, Amen.

The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, &c.

EVENING.

Almighty God who hast mercifully preserved me through another day, accept my thanks and praise for thy loving kindness, and of thy great goodness take me into thy care and keeping this night, watch over and defend me while I sleep, raise me in the morning refreshed and fitted for the duties of another day. Forgive, O Lord, for thy dear Son Jesus Christ's sake, whatever I have this day said or done amiss ; yea, mercifully vouchsafe to pardon all my sins ; and give unto me thy grace that I may be enabled henceforth to live more to thy glory. Assist me to understand and profit by thine holy word ; may its sacred precepts be the daily rule of my life, and may I be enabled so to depend on thy gracious promises in Christ Jesus, that finally through his merits I may attain unto everlasting life.

Look in mercy, O Lord, upon my (parents and all my) relations, friends and neighbours; give unto them, and me, grace to walk as in thy sight; bless us in all our worldly undertakings; enable us to provide things honest in the sight of all men; assist us to keep holy thy day, and to improve our religious opportunities, as we shall wish to have done when we come to die; and finally of thy great mercy do more and better for us, than we can ask or think, for the sake and merits and through the intercession of Jesus Christ our Lord, Amen.

PRAYER

Under great and distressing temptation.

Almighty God, in whom I live and move and have my being, look down in tender mercy upon me, and pardon and blot out all the sins which I have committed. If thou, Lord, wert extreme to mark what is done amiss, O Lord, who might abide it; have mercy upon me, O my God, have mercy upon me: for Jesus

Christ's sake vouchsafe to pardon all mine iniquities, and let not my sins rise up in judgment against me ; O Lord, I desire to be deeply humbled before thee, on account of all my transgressions : my sinful thoughts, my vain and corrupt conversation, my hasty and unguarded tempers, and all those sinful indulgences into which I have been betrayed ; alas ! O Lord God, how have I been overpowered by the assaults of the great enemy, and how grievously have I forgotten the vows of God which are upon me. Lord, pardon my sins for Jesus Christ's sake ; create in me a clean heart, O God ; renew a right spirit in me. Give me not over into the hands of the enemy. Let not my last state be worst than the first ; but, Lord, mercifully appear on my behalf ; rebuke the tempter ; that he may depart from me, strengthen me to get the victory over sin. Lord, I am sore tied and bound with the chain of my sins, I am not able of myself to get free, O let the pitifulness of thy great mercy deliver me, let not the enemy triumph over me, let me not give occasion to the ungodly to blaspheme, but, Lord,

appear on my behalf, convert me by thy grace, strengthen me by thy mighty power, save me or I perish, pluck me out of the hands of the destroyer, and help me, O my God, to walk in newness of life.

O Lord, thou mightest justly cast me out of thy sight, and no longer be intreated of me. I am ashamed when I think how careless, how abandoned I have been, how grievously I have sinned against light, and against knowledge. Surely my sins are as scarlet, they are more in number than the hairs of my head; I am the chief of sinners, O God, be merciful unto me, be merciful unto me.

Yet, O Lord, I come unto thee. Thou mightest justly leave me to perish; but thou hast said, thou wilt not break the bruised reed, thou wilt not cast out him that cometh: Lord, I come; forgive me my grievous transgressions, blot out, for Christ's sake, all my offences, renew my soul by thy grace, break in me the power of sin. Turn thou me and I shall be turned, for thou art the Lord my God. Draw me and I will run after thee. O, for thine own name's sake, be merciful

unto me, and pour down on me the riches of thy grace.

Look upon me in tender mercy, O Lord, through the atoning sacrifice of thy dear Son. Blessed be thy name, that the very chief of sinners are invited to come unto thee through him. Lord, help me to come unto thee aright, show me the way I should go, pour down upon me the riches of thy grace, give me the victory over sin, keep me, keep me from falling, and of thy great mercy, bring me, O Lord, to thine heavenly kingdom, that I may never perish; but praise thee for ever, for thou art the Lord my God. O have mercy upon me for Jesus Christ's sake, Amen.

PRAYER

When confined from public worship.

O Lord, who hast commanded thy people to assemble together, and worship thee in thine earthly courts; to hear thy word, and draw near to thee at thy table; look down in mercy upon me, who am

now, in thy providence, prevented from complying with thy command. I must confess, O Lord, before thee, that I have in times past, too often neglected to improve those opportunities with which I have been favoured, and that thou mightest justly withdraw thy loving kindness from me: yet be merciful unto me, O Lord; be merciful unto me, for Jesus Christ's sake pardon all my sins; for his sake accept my unworthy person and services; and pour down upon me, through him, the abundance of thy grace; O assist me henceforth to live more to thy glory, and grant, O Lord, that I may now be enabled to improve this season in which I am confined from thy courts, so as to obtain some benefit to my soul.

If confined by illness, proceed as follows:

Mercifully grant that this affliction, which thou hast laid upon me, may be sanctified and overruled for good; may I be enabled at length to say, that though no affliction is joyous, but rather grievous, yet that afterwards it worketh the peace-

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able fruits of righteousness to those who are exercised therewith; may I be enabled to say, "it is good for me that I have been afflicted: before I was afflicted I went astray, but now have I kept thy word." Lord, help me ever to remember that at length I must die; and though this sickness may not be unto death, yet as I know not the time or manner of my removal, assist me to prepare daily for my solemn change. O grant that my sins may indeed be forgiven, for Christ's sake; may his blood wash away mine offences; let them not appear in judgment against me, but grant that I may find mercy in that day. May I be indeed accounted righteous before thee for the merit of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ; may he be my Advocate with the Father; my great High Priest, my ever-living Intercessor; my guide and support; yea, all my salvation, and all my desire. Lord, hear and answer me through him; help me now to read and understand thy holy word. Speak peace to my soul through the atoning blood. Assist me to meditate on those holy mansions which the Re-

deemer is gone before to provide for his people; fit and prepare me for the holy employment of that blessed place; if permitted again to visit thine earthly courts, may it be to sing in the ways of the Lord, that great is the mercy of the Lord—to pay my vows in the sight of all thy people—to take the cup of salvation, and call upon the name of the Lord. If still confined from thy courts, may I yet find it good to be here; and O grant that this life ended, I may see thy face and sing thy praise in glory everlasting, for the sake and through the merits of Jesus Christ my Lord and Saviour. Amen.

If confined at home in attendance on a sick person.

Look down, O Lord, upon this thy servant, whom thou hast seen fit, in thy providence, to afflict, and mercifully vouchsafe to sanctify the dispensation. Rebuke the disorder that it may now depart. Restore to thy servant health and strength. Grant that the affliction may

not be in vain ; but may it by thine Holy Spirit's aid, be instrumental in producing true repentance, godly sorrow for sin ; living faith in Christ Jesus and devotion of soul to thy service, so that should this sickness be indeed unto death, thy servant may be found ready to depart, and may be admitted to heavenly felicity, or if mercifully spared and continued among us may be assisted and enabled daily more and more to walk in newness of life.

And give me, O Lord, grace and wisdom suitably to attend to this thy servant. Strengthen me both in body and mind for the work to which I am called. Give me patience and resignation cheerfully to bear any hasty words or painful remarks which the sufferings and trials of thy servant may occasion. Make me active and cheerful and useful. Give me that foresight which may enable me to see what is wanted and provide it in due time ; and give me that firmness and presence of mind, that should thy servant be in the most imminent danger, I may not be overcome by my own fear or weakness, but render every possible assistance, so as in-

deed to be a helper to the afflicted and promote thy glory.

And, Lord, help me to derive instruction from the painful trials I am called to witness : while I see another racked with pain, and unable to attend, even for a few moments, may I learn how little can be done on a sick and dying bed, and may I now improve the season of health and opportunity to make my calling and election sure. May I be more diligent in studying thy word, more careful to improve each returning opportunity of attending at thy house — more fervent in prayer, and more entirely devoted to thee, my God.

And, Lord, help me, while attending to the bodily wants of thy servant, to suggest from time to time, some spiritual instruction and consolation. Assist me to recollect those passages of thine holy word, which may be applicable, and may I introduce such passages in a proper and suitable way. Have mercy upon this thy servant, and restore health and strength if it be thy blessed will, but O for Jesus Christ's sake, prepare us all for that solemn change which must at length

come; and may we all be then found ready and admitted to the marriage supper of the Lamb, to praise thy name for ever. Hear, O God, and have mercy on this thine afflicted servant, and on me, and on every member of this household, for Jesus Christ's sake. Amen.

If detained at home to take care of children, &c. while other members of the family are attending God's house.

Assist me, O Lord, in the duties of that place and station to which I am now called. May I indeed watch over and take care of these dear children who are entrusted to me; and be enabled to improve some part of the time to their spiritual good and thy glory. Help me to converse with them aright, and to tell them of the love and mercy of him who hath said, "Suffer the little children to come unto me, and forbid them not, for of such is the kingdom of heaven. O Lord, make them thy children, give them thy Holy Spirit, put thy fear into their hearts; keep them from being led astray

by the temptations of an evil world ; may they grow in wisdom, and in stature, and in favour with God and man. While they sleep, help me to read and meditate on thy holy word. When they wake, tune my heart, and assist my voice to praise thy holy name ; and while they attempt to lisp thy praises, Lord, grant that out of the mouth of these babes and sucklings thy praise may be perfected. Lord, bless them, and their parents, and all their and my relations and friends, and may they profit by those ordinances of thine house on which they are now attending, and derive instruction and consolation from thy holy word ; and may I, and they, and these dear children, be indeed partakers of that salvation which was purchased for us by the humiliation unto death of thy holy child Jesus. Hear, O Lord, and answer me for his sake, and through his all-atoning merits, in whose name and words I further call upon thee, saying :

Our Father, which art in heaven, hallowed be thy name. Thy kingdom come. Thy will be done in earth, as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread.

And forgive us our trespasses, as we forgive them that trespass against us. And lead us not into temptation; but deliver us from evil: For thine is the kingdom, the power, and the glory, for ever and ever. Amen.

The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, and the love of God, and the fellowship of the Holy Ghost, be with us all, now and for evermore. Amen.

THE END.

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